Stourbridge
CHRONICLE

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NATALIE – WE STILL HAVE HOPE

Report by Richard Guttridge

Natalie Putt – missing

THE case of Madeleine McCann is one the nation has become familiar with in the 10 years since she disappeared. But there is a girl from Dudley who has been missing for even longer.

Desperate as the McCanns' plight has been since their three-year-old daughter vanished in Portugal, around 100,000 children go missing in the UK every year.

There are many other families out there who have been waiting for answers, including that of Gornal teenager Natalie Putt. New mother Natalie, aged 17, vanished from her Lower Gornal home in 2003 and has not been seen since.

Almost 14 years on, half-sister Rebecca Coggins refuses to give up hope of seeing her again. "I hope she is living somewhere, is happy and has got her own family," Rebecca said. "I have to believe that she went of her own free will and made her own life, because the alternative is just too painful."

The family was shattered when Natalie failed to return home, having apparently gone to the shops. She left without her 11-week-old baby. She did not take her mobile phone or any other possessions.

Natalie had been with a friend the day before, returning home at around 9am and stayed until noon before heading out again, and hasn't been seen by her family since.

Sightings

Sightings were reported across the country, from Bournemouth to Scotland, but her loved ones are no clearer on what happened to Natalie, who would now be 31. Police say there was no evidence she was murdered or that she planned to kill herself.

Since the day she went missing her bank account has remained untouched. The last communication she made was a voicemail on the day suggesting she was planning to visit friends in Tamworth.

The case was re-engerised four years ago when police dug up a paddock in Himley where Natalie kept horses but the search proved fruitless.

As time has gone on, Rebecca, who now lives in Nottingham, says she has learned to live with the torment of not knowing.

"Self-preservation stops you from being so frantic and you adjust but that doesn't mean she is not thought of. I have got her picture upstairs and sometimes I will say 'where are you?'

"The thought that someday somebody walking a dog will discover something in the woods is unbearable."

Men posing as police flag down vehicle

TWO men in a car posing as police officers have been travelling across the West Midlands – and managed to flag at least one vehicle down.

The force has issued a statement to alert members of the public to the National Crime Agency car with blue lights which has been travelling across the region.

The woman driver was asked to get into the 1 Series silver BMW but she refused and immediately reported the matter to police. Officers said on Monday that the vehicle was stolen in Solihull on Saturday between 5pm and 11pm.

It has already been spotted with two separate cloned number plates, according to police.

Detective Chief Inspector Craig Underwood said: "We are asking anyone who sees this vehicle to call us straight away. A police officer will always show their warrant card as proof of their identity, if this is not shown or you have any concerns then call us on 101."

A comment on Facebook stated: "Two sets of different cloned plates have already been used on the car which is why we haven't released the number plate details."

Museum of glass needs extra cash

A FUNDRAISING push has started to ensure the opening of a new Black Country glass museum remains on track.

Trustees behind the White House Cone Museum of Glass in Wordsley need to raise £20,000 in eight weeks.

The museum has been built with £2.1 million from the European Development Fund and a £900,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The latest cash injection is needed for an internal fit-out or the project will fall behind schedule.

Trustee Graham Fisher said: "We need this to be able to move forward and we've now only got eight weeks to do it. The funding we had for the building work has been used and it looks fabulous. The second phase now is for the fit-out to turn it into a museum to host the collections."

The centre, supported by the British Glass Foundation, replaces Broadfield House glass museum in Kingswinford. Mr Fisher added: "Not getting the money raised in time would be a serious blow but we are confident we'll get there."

To help visit crowdfunder.co.uk/the-white-house-cone-museum-of-glass/

Man charged over body in wardrobe

The family of 17-year-old Megan Louise Bills have paid tribute to the teenager and want to know how she met her death

Family devastated

A MAN has been charged in connection with the death of a teenager whose body was found in a double wardrobe at a flat in Brierley Hill.

Unemployed Ashley Foster, aged 24, was charged with preventing the lawful and decent burial of Megan Bills between April 16, 2017, and May 4, 2017.

At Dudley Magistrates Court on Monday he confirmed his name, age and that he has no fixed abode.

Mrs Maxine Jarrousse-Jones, prosecuting, told the court that police had been called to an address in Highgate Road where the remains were discovered, after neighbours reported a smell.

She told the court: "Police attended the flat and found a double wardrobe wrapped in cling film. The wardrobe was opened and a young woman's body was inside."

Foster was not asked to enter a plea and was remanded in custody to appear at Wolverhampton Crown Court on June 5.

Officers cordoned off the flat in Highgate Road last Thursday.

The family of 17-year-old Miss Bills issued a tribute. They said: "We are devastated by the loss of our daughter whose life has so unnecessarily been cut short. Whilst nothing can fill the huge gap in our family life that Megan's passing has left we trust that in time we will have answers that will help us understand why this dreadful event has occurred."

TRANSPORT

Bus operator steps in to rescue service

BUS operator Central Buses has stepped in to takeover the running of a Stourbridge service that was due to be axed.

The Diamond bus 142 route between Stourbridge and Halesowen will be run by Central Buses from May 30.

It will continue to run hourly in the daytime calling at Stourbridge Junction Rail Station, Wollescote, Wynall, Huntingtree Road, Highfield Lane and Andrew Road.

There will be a few minor changes to the route with buses going along Highfield Lane and Andrew Road instead of Dunstall Road, Rosemary Road and Hagley Road.

ACCIDENT

Driver flees as car impaled on fence

A MOTORIST is lucky to be alive after the car he was driving careered at high speed into metal barriers on the side of the road and overturned.

The car veered onto the pavement in Grange Road, Halesowen, smashed into the steel fence becoming impaled – before the driver ran off!

The alert was raised by a passer-by but when 999 crews arrived the driver had fled. The collision happened outside Fountain House at the junction with Queensway at 7.37pm on Sunday.

VIOLENCE

Teenagers arrested over machete attack

TWO 16-year-old boys have been arrested in connection with a machete attack outside a pub near Halesowen.

Officers were called to The Crown, in Carters Lane, just after 1.15am on March 25 after reports of disorder outside the pub.

A 22-year-old man was attacked with a machete, causing serious injuries, and was taken to hospital for treatment. Police say he continues to make a steady recovery.

Officers are continuing to appeal for information. Witnesses are asked to call 101, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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PORRIDGE FOR A LONG LIFE

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Street wise on business, says PM

Prime Minister Theresa May congratulates Andy Street

NEWLY-ELECTED West Midlands Mayor Andy Street is the man to deliver investment and jobs to the West Midlands, said the Prime Minister as she arrived in the region to celebrate his win.

Theresa May headed straight for the area just hours after former John Lewis boss Mr Street was elected as the first West Midlands Mayor.

The two were taken on a tour of UTC Aerospace Systems in Wolverhampton, which unveiled a multi-million pound package of investment at its factory in March.

And Mrs May said that while she was not complacent about a Tory win in the General Election on June 8, Mr Street's election was a good starting point.

She said: "I would like to congratulate Andy Street on winning the West Midlands mayoralty. People here in the West Midlands now have a strong local champion in Andy who will get on with the job for delivering for the local area. A strong mayor here in the West Midlands, a Conservative mayor, working with a Conservative Government can deliver for this region.

"I have seen in visits to companies I have done with Andy his determination to ensure there is investment, job and opportunities for the people here in the West Midlands. What Andy will be doing is ensuring the West Midlands is projected as an area for investment, jobs and opportunities. What is great about Andy is that he has business experience that he can bring to bear.

"He is passionate about the West Midlands. He will be working with Government to ensure that the West Midlands is able to develop."

Robber hit a pregnant mother with hammer

A ROBBER who attacked a terrified pregnant mother in the street with a claw hammer has been jailed for life and told he must serve at least 10 years.

Minutes earlier Andrew Bate had attempted to snatch an elderly woman's handbag but she bravely fought back and a passer-by came to her aid.

Judge Amjad Niwaz told 49-year-old Bate from Dudley that he posed a 'real risk' to the public.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that the incident came just 18 days after Bate's release from prison for robbery. He had quit a hostel in Birmingham, where he was required to stay, to see family in Dudley, said Mr Charles Crinion, prosecuting.

Bate had followed Nigen Parveen as she left the One Stop Shop on Buffery Road, on October 16 at around 11am. The 37-year-old, who was almost five months pregnant, was wheeling her one-year-old child along in a pushchair. As she turned into School Drive, Bate took the hammer from his rucksack and demanded money.

Grabbed

She shouted: 'My baby! I'm pregnant' and said she would give him money. As she leaned down to get her bag, Bate hit Mrs Parveen on the head with the hammer. She suffered a fractured skull.

Several motorists stopped to help her and one of them, Sarah Skelding, whose three children were in her car, challenged Bate and was herself threatened with the hammer.

Ten minutes earlier Bate had tried to rob 74-year-old Janet Darby in High Street.

Bate had a catalogue of previous convictions including sexual offences, robbery and burglary.

Mr Nicholas Berry, defending, said Bate had a chronic drug addiction after falling into a spiral of self-destruction after being sexually abused at the age of 13 by a care worker, who was later jailed.

Bate, of no fixed abode, pleaded guilty to grievous bodily harm, robbery, attempted robbery, possessing an offensive weapon and failing to comply with sex offenders' requirements. Judge Niwaz said: "You pose a real risk of repeating these serious offences and even of taking someone's life."

Wood you look at that, it's blue-tiful

Jess Brookes, of Stourton, with her partner Joe Edwards, of Kinver, enjoying the bluebell wood at Keeper's Cottage

HUNDREDS of people visited a bluebell wood which was opened to the public for charity.

More than 350 people went along to Keeper's Cottage Bluebell Wood in Stourton, near Stourbridge, over the weekend as part of the National Garden Scheme openings.

It is the second year that the wood has been opened as part of the national scheme which raises cash for charities.

After the successful event last year it was decided to do it again and owner Peter Brookes said the second opening had also proved successful.

Mr Brookes, aged 60, said: "Bluebells are a quintessential English scene and people love walking through them.

"We're very pleased with how it's gone but are still working out exactly how much money we've raised – but it is a substantial amount.

"It's a really nice spot right next to Smestow Brook and one lady described it as 'a little paradise'.

"It is a lovely thing to do and people just want to see a bit of nature and there's also quite a bit of bird life as well."

Last year's opening raised more than £2,300 for the National Garden Scheme. The main beneficiaries were Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie and Hospice UK.

Mr Brookes said visitors had also enjoyed home-made teas and private visits to the wood off Greensforge Lane can be arranged.

Jail term cut for man who groomed and abused girl

A MAN from Stourbridge who groomed and abused a 14-year-old schoolgirl has had his sentence cut on appeal.

Stuart George Edmonds, aged 34, met the girl in a park and sent her a string of text messages before having sex with her.

Edmonds, of no fixed address, admitted three counts of sexual activity with a child when he appeared before Wolverhampton Crown Court in September last year.

He was handed an extended sentence for public protection of 11 and a half years, which was made up of a seven and a half year jail term, plus four years extra on licence.

But his jail term has now been cut to five years and his extended licence to three by judges sitting at the Court of Appeal in London.

Edmonds has been arrested after police received an anonymous tip about him.

Although his victim had agreed to have sex with him, Edmonds knew that she was below the legal age for giving consent.

The court heard that he was on licence from another prison sentence for criminal damage when he committed the offences in 2014. He also had previous convictions for drink-driving, possession of an imitation firearm. and had been branded a danger to the public.

Mrs Justice Andrews, sitting with Lord Justice Treacy and Judge Eleri Rees QC, ruled that the original sentence was 'too long'.

£280k plan to tackle speeding

ACTION is to be taken to curb speeding on some of Dudley's major routes, with £280,000 being lined up for improvements.

Dudley Council has revealed it is set to give the go-ahead to traffic calming on a number of roads including Birmingham New Road on the Tipton and Dudley border, King Street in Dudley and Northway in Sedgley.

One of the busiest roads in the Black Country, Birmingham New Road, could have various speed management measures installed 'to prevent dangerous movements on the dual carriageway' and its junction with Ivyhouse Lane.

Traffic management will be put in place on accident black spot Gospel End Street, along with possible junction realignment to improve safety.

Chairman's walk on trail raises £500

A DUDLEY businessman raised £500 taking part in a nine-mile walk for Macmillian Cancer Care. Mohammed Sagir, Chairman of the Voice of Dudley Business, took part in the Dudley Trail. He completed in three hours and 10 minutes, and thanked his sponsors.

Expectations at school are too low, says watchdog

A PRIMARY school in Dudley has been told it needs to improve by education watchdog Ofsted, which says its leadership and teaching needs to be better.

Bromley Hills Primary School, in Kingswinford, was rated good but has dropped to 'requires improvement' following the inspection in March

The school, which had 288 pupils on its roll during the time of inspection, was told to improve in four out of five areas.

Ofsted says expectations of achievement are 'lower than they should be'. The report also stated: "Teachers set work which is not always well-matched to the pupils' abilities."

However, the school was rated good in the area of personal development, behaviour and welfare. Inspectors also found that attendance rates had steadily improved, but are still below the national average.

Headteacher Jon Stevens said: "We are extremely proud of our school and the positive aspects highlighted in the report including pupils' writing, as well as the personal development, behaviour and welfare of children which were rated 'good' by inspectors.

"They also said that pupils behave well and are polite, courteous and are respectful of others, something we can all be proud of.

"We are always striving for improvements at our school to ensure children and staff continue to develop and grow, and we very much welcome the constructive feedback on areas we need to improve on."

Council trio stand in General Election

THE leader of Dudley Council and the authority's children's services boss are among a trio of high profile borough councillors standing in the snap General Election.

Councillor Pete Lowe, who has led the authority since 2014, has been confirmed as Labour's candidate for Stourbridge.

And Councillor Ian Cooper, who has the portfolio for children's services, will stand for Labour in Halesowen and Rowley Regis.

As expected, UKIP councillor Bill Etheridge will renew his 2015 rivalry with Ian Austin and Les Jones in Dudley North.

Mr Lowe finished second behind Conservative Margot James in 2015, polling 31.5 per cent of the vote.

Woman is found dead in village

A WOMAN has been found dead in a village near Stourbridge. Police said Julie Melven, 56, was found dead at a house in Morfe Lane, Enville. The results of a post-mortem were being awaited. No arrests have been made.

£6m unpaid tax is owed to council

CASH-STRAPPED Dudley Council is owed more than £6 million in unpaid tax from the last five years.

It comes as the authority increased council tax nearly four per cent across the borough last month in a bid to save £26 million over the next three years.

Bosses have also made drastic cuts including shutting the town's museum and art gallery, with the collection being moved to the archives centre, and cutting library opening hours.

Opposition leader Tory councillor Patrick Harley said: "The council is always telling us they have a very good collection rate but to have over £6m outstanding is shocking. They should be doing everything they can to get the money.

"They're cutting front line services year after year but it'd be an easy start to collect the council tax owed because it's an awful lot of money."

Iain Newman, chief officer for finance and legal said: "Like all councils, we do have some council tax owing from a small proportion of our residents, however we do have an excellent record for recovering council tax and our collection rates are amongst the best in the country."

Rise

UKIP group leader Councillor Paul Brothwood also hit out at the amount owed to the authority.

The Wordsley councillor said: "It's an astronomical amount of money.

"There's been savage cuts over the past 18 months or longer and the cuts wouldn't have had to be so savage if we had the money owed.

"We want to maximise the money coming in to look after important services.

"It's people's duty to pay council tax and if they fail to we have to go after them ruthlessly.

The amount owed in council tax is from the period April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2017.

The Labour-controlled authority initially put forward a 4.99 per cent increase, but Conservatives and UKIP united to reject the proposal, resulting in a 3.99 per cent rise.

The rise was approved by a narrow margin of 36 votes in favour and 35 against.

Much-loved zoo has wild time on 80th birthday

VISITORS flocked to Dudley Zoo to celebrate 80 years since the popular Castle Hill attraction first opened its doors.

The day of celebrations on Saturday started off with a fundraising walk, which saw 200 people taking part to try to raise cash for the zoo's orangutan enclosure appeal.

Then at 2pm there was a party in Dudley Castle's courtyard with retro singers The Glamophones entertaining visitors.

There was also a display of zoo memorabilia on show throughout the day.

Zoo director Derek Grove said he hopes the attraction – officially called Dudley Zoological Gardens – can continue to inspire people for at least another eight decades.

He said: "We had a fabulous day celebrating 80 years of Dudley Zoo with the hundreds of visitors who supported our fourth charity walk.

"The zoo is a very different place today to the zoo eight decades ago as we continue to expand and improve the facilities for more than 200 animal species and the hundreds of thousands of visitors who visit year-on-year, helping us raise funds and awareness for vital in-situ and ex-situ conservation projects around the world.

Future

"We'd like to thank our visitors who continue to support our mission to create a better future for wildlife.

"We're proud to have such loyal supporters, many who have grown up with Dudley Zoo, and we expect to have raised thousands of pounds from the fundraiser with every penny going towards helping us transform the orangutan enclosure.

"We're excited for the future, so let's see what the next 80 years holds."

Mr Grove said the milestone was as much about looking back as well as looking forward, adding: "When Dudley Zoo first opened on May 6, 1937, it was declared the most modern zoo in Europe and people got to see animals they'd only ever read about in books.

"For 80 years we've welcomed millions of visitors who have enjoyed seeing and learning more about our incredible species.

"Dudley Zoo is proud to be part of the region's rich history. There have been lots of changes and improvements to the zoo as we continue to expand and improve the facilities. We'd like to thank everyone who has supported our mission to create a better future for wildlife and hope we can continue inspiring future generations for the next 80 years."

Hundreds joined the fundraising walk for the orangutan enclosure at the Castle Hill attraction

Staff celebrating the big day at Dudley Zoo

Laura Partridge's spectacular zoo birthday cake

NEWS IN BRIEF

£6m roadworks now under way

A £6.3m roadworks scheme in Pensnett is now under way.

The work on High Street will last for a year and intends to cut delays in the long run.

The work will include installing traffic lights at Tansey Green Road and new pedestrian crossing.

The plans have been in the pipeline for years and were previously expected to start around the middle of the year.

The project is set to cause major disruption on the road, which is used by 30,000 vehicles a day.

A night out with TV's grumpy Jenny

GRUMPY Old Women star Jenny Eclair brings her new comedy show to Dudley Town Hall next Thursday (May 18).

Entitled How To Be A Middle Aged Woman (Without Going Insane), the comedienne – who has appeared on Splash, I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here!, QI and Grumpy Old Women – will be putting middle age under the microscope. Jenny was the first woman to win comedy's Perrier Award

See www.boroughhalls.co.uk or call (01384) 812812.

More independent traders in town

DUDLEY has a higher ratio of independent retailers than most other towns and cities in the region.

More than two-thirds – 67 per cent – are independently run in Dudley. Stourbridge and West Bromwich are next best, both at 64 per cent. In Wolverhampton 61 per cent are independents, and in Walsall it's 62 per cent.

According to the Local Data Company, the number for 2016 has seen an overall slight increase on the year before, of 0.3 per cent.

West End stars bring songs from the shows

WEST End stars are coming to Birmingham to present The Sound of Musicals at Birmingham Symphony Hall tonight (Thursday).

Singer-actresses Hannah Waddingham, from the London Palladium's The Wizard of Oz and TV's Game of Thrones, and Wicked star Louise Dearman will join Tim Howar and Oliver Tompsett and the London Concert Orchestra for songs from the shows. See www.thsh.co.uk or call 0121 280 3333.

Prayers in the park

A PARK will become a place of worship as visitors are invited to join in Praying for Dudley.

Priory Park will host the gathering on Sunday, June 4, from 2.30pm to 3.30pm. Praying for Dudley is being organised by the Methodist Church and Church of England.

COUNTY NEWS

Racecourse hosts an inflatable run

WOLVERHAMPTON'S first inflatable 5k race is to bounce into the city's racecourse in two weeks time.

It is at Dunstall Park in Wolverhampton on May 21 and the fun inflatables allow participants to bounce, crawl, climb and slide their way around the course.

Up to 5,000 people are expected to take part and there are a handful of places left.

To enter go to the event page online at www.ukrunningevents.co.uk.

Entry costs £35 per person, with group discounts available.

Apartments to be built near island

AN apartment block is to be created near a busy roundabout in the Black Country.

A total of 14 homes will be created in the three-storey building to be built in Halesowen, near the Aldi at the A458 roundabout.

The plans have been given the green light by Dudley Council planners and will continue the regeneration of the area which has also seen a hotel and restaurant created.

Work is expected to start in the near future following the approval of the plans.

Villagers in fight for parish council

ALMOST 200 people have responded to a survey of residents on plans to form a parish council in an historic West Midland village.

Proposals for a parish council in Tettenhall were put forward last year.

However a rival group opposes the scheme because it would mean paying an additional council tax precept and has launched a petition.

The city council is due to reveal the results of the community governance review in June.

Knight and days for half term fun

KING Arthur is the theme of spring half-term events at a Black Country venue. Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery will host two themed activity days based on the legendary figure on May 31 and June 1.

Children can dress up as knights, kings and queens, while also enjoying quests, crafts and comedy as part of the museum's historical half-term activities. Entry on both days is free with charges for crafts from 50p to £2. Call 0121 5560683 for details.

Hospice cash walk

FUNDRAISERS will walk 125 miles in two days to raise money for a Black Country-based charity. The team will set off from Borth, in Wales, on May 19 and head for the Maverick pub in Amblecote near Stourbridge. The Mary Stevens Hospice fundraisers aim to reach the pub by May 21.

Shockers but cash pledge makes the road ahead look much better

Jim McGregor's picture shows Fernwood Drive, Rugeley

THE Chronicle campaign to highlight the worst potholes in the region has painted a shocking picture of the state of our roads but there is good news ahead.

Up to £5 million could be spent on fixing thousands of potholes in Staffordshire this year, Tory bosses have declared. Re-elected Tory county council group leader Philip Atkins revealed that £3m had already been committed to repairing the roads in 2017 while the administration would now try to secure a further £2m.

Mark Deaville, the previous highways chief who likewise retained his seat comfortably, defended the council's record on responding to 'emergency' pothole reports. He said it would be a priority to address the 13,000-strong backlog of road defects.

Meanwhile several sites flagged up in our campaign have either seen repairs carried out or pencilled in for work. The roads around junction 11 of the M6 between Cannock and Wolverhampton sparked several complaints from readers. Work has now been carried out to fill in some of the craters.

TOP OF THE POTS

Both Five Ways Island and Hill Top in Hednesford were highlighted as troublespots and funds have been allocated to look at both sites. Meanwhile Richard Sears, of Hednesford, highlighted poor pothole repairs at the entrance to the Chase Golf Club and Spa near Cannock. But he was delighted to tell us this week that the issue has been addressed and several other potholes on the Pottal Pool Road from the A34 roundabout to the crossroads at Mansty Lane. And there was praise from Carol Longmore of Wollaston said: "Three times I have reported potholes and on each occasion they have been fixed speedily. The last ones I reported at 3-30 in the afternoon, by 9-30 the next day it was fixed!"

But there are still problems. Jim McGregor sent a picture of Fernwood Drive in Rugeley. He said: "I was emailed back last week by the council and was told that "no action was to be taken. Absolutely shocking."

Thanks to the help from readers we have found out about the worst-hit roads and will soon be publishing the 'Top of the Pots' which we will take to councils in the hope that they will prioritise these areas.

Man accused of killings is remanded in custody

Report by Rob Cox

A MAN has admitted attempting to murder a father at his Stourbridge home.

Aaron Barley, aged 23, appeared at Birmingham Crown Court where he said he was guilty of attempting to murder 47-year-old Peter Wilkinson.

Mr Wilkinson was found at his home in Greyhound Lane, Stourbridge on March 30 with multiple stab wounds. Barley is also charged with the murder of Mr Wilkinson's wife, Tracey, 50, and 13-year-old son, Pierce. They were killed at the same address on the same date. Barley was not asked to enter pleas to the charges relating to Mrs Wilkinson and her son.

Barley, of no fixed address, spoke only to confirm his name and to enter the guilty plea to the attempted murder charge.

He was wearing a red Tshirt and bright green prison jumpsuit. He was flanked in the dock by four uniformed security officers.

In the back row of the public gallery Mr Wilkinson's daughter Lydia was sat about 10 feet away from Barley. She had been studying at Bristol University when the attack took place at her family home.

Barley was remanded in custody and will next appear before court on July 19.

A provisional trial date relating to the other offences was set by His Honour Judge Melbourne Inman QC for October 3 at Birmingham Crown Court with an estimation it could last two weeks.

Barley appeared to show no emotion as he came into the dock or as he made his guilty plea. The judge told him: "Your next hearing will be on July 19. Your trial will take place on the third of October until when you will be remanded in custody."

Still time to join cycle challenge

Four-times world champ, veteran cyclist Hugh Porter ready for the Round the Wrekin challenge

NUMBERS for an epic charity bike challenge are up compared to last year – but cycling legend Hugh Porter has encouraged even more people to get involved.

The four-times world pursuit winner said things were looking good ahead of this year's Round the Wrekin sportive.

Honorary patron of Halesowen Athletic and Cycling Club Mr Porter, 77, said: "The numbers are up compared to where we were last year. We're hoping for bumper entries."

Mr Porter has urged more to sign up so it smashes last year's turnout and gets close to the thousand mark when the event takes place on Sunday, May 21. Money raised will go to Compton Hospice. Banks's brewery will be paying an upfront sponsorship fee plus £5 for each rider who signs up after the 500th entry.

There three routes from Kingswinford Rugby Club into Shropshire are the Hugh Porter 38km, standard 102km or epic 160km. Visit roundthewrekin.co.uk

Rachael Heyhoe Flint

Charity aid in honour of Rachael tops £3,000

A CHARITY collection named in honour of Baroness Rachael Heyhoe Flint raised more than £3,000.

The yearly collection by Wheelchair charity Power Pleas Trust was the brainchild of the Wolves vice-president and former England cricketer.

To recognise her contribution to the good cause bosses decided the collection will now be known as Rachael's Day. Fundraisers were collecting ahead of Wolves home match against Blackburn.

Grateful

Power Pleas Trust Chairman, Keith Berry, said the sum collected was £2,375.15 with an additional anonymous donation of £100 and gift aid of £618.79 making a grand total of £3,093.94.

The charity was supported on the day by members of Tettenhall Rotary Club.

Mr Berry, said: "The Rotary Club and Power Pleas are very grateful for the continuing support of the Wolves Community Trust and the Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club."

Rachael died, aged 77, in January following a short battle with cancer.

The charity tends to allocate the money raised from the annual collection to one individual and this year the money has been put towards a 'Strikeforce' powered football wheelchair, to be used by Telford Powerchair FC.

New website aims to foster support

DURING national foster care fortnight, Dudley Council's fostering service is shouting about the 'best job in the world' by launching a new website.

This year's Foster Care Fortnight, which started on May 8, has a theme of 'foster care transforms lives'.

Dudley Council's fostering service is encouraging people interested in fostering to take the first step towards fostering and transforming a child's life by visiting their new website www.fosteringindudley.org.uk to find out more or call (01384) 815833.

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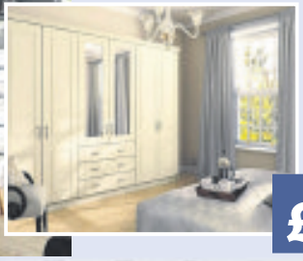
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New £1m care centre is set to open by Christmas

BOSSES at the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust have revealed work to complete an urgent care centre will be completed this year.

The trust has received £1 million funding from the Government that will be used in a bid to ease pressure on the hard-pressed accident and emergency department at Russells Hall Hospital.

Bosses will invest the cash in the new facility at the Dudley hospital, which will help staff to deal with patients coming into A&E more efficiently, relieving hospital resources and meaning waiting time targets are met.

Diane Wake, chief executive at the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, said: "The work will be completed by Christmas."

The funding has come from the Department of Health, which has allocated £56m to hospitals around the country.

The extra cash has been welcomed by Dudley Council's cabinet member for health and wellbeing, Councillor Rachael Harris. She said: "The A&E department at Russells Hall has been very stretched, but staff did very well over winter compared to surrounding areas. Any investment is clearly welcome."

The trust has celebrated the new funding from the Government, which is well needed.

A spokesman for the trust said: This really is very good news for all of our patients."

Bus diverted as cars block road

A BUS had to be diverted due to parked cars blocking a road in Dudley.

Service 222 was diverted both ways via Commonside, High Oak and High Street in Pensnett, because of the parked cars blocking Tennyson Street, near to Russells Hall Hospital, last week.

Ward councillor John Martin said: "The parking issue is an ongoing and a regular problem I'm afraid.

"It's mainly caused by visitors to the hospital because there isn't enough parking at peak times and some people just may not want to pay for parking.

"The residents living around the hospital have always been patient even though people are parked outside their homes regularly."

Firecrews save unit from flames

PROMPT action by firefighters stopped a Brierley Hill factory unit from going up in flames. Crews from Stourbridge and Brierley Hill were called to the pallets fire in Thorns Road at around 1.15am on April 30.

Fake news? No, trust us, what your local newspaper deals with is facts

TODAY, this newspaper joins forces with local and regional titles across the UK to launch a campaign to fight fake news.

As we approach the most significant national election in a generation, the need for independent local newspapers and their websites to report and explain the issues in an entirely neutral, honest and balanced way is essential.

This approach is in keeping with our ethos of always seeking to provide trusted news, campaigning on behalf of our communities, exposing wrongdoing through painstaking investigations, and ensuring that the voice of residents and the business community in the Black Country and Staffordshire is heard loud and clear.

This election will be different from any other. It is not simply that the outcome will define our future relationship with the EU and the manner in which it is negotiated; but it will be held in the context of the phenomenon of fake news.

In the past 12 months there has barely been a single global event that has not been infected by the suggestion that entirely fabricated information designed to deceive had been circulated indiscriminately via social media. Repetition through 'shares' and 'likes' adds an undeserved authority. Comment, unlabelled as such, masquerades as truth; satire is confused with reality

The great global social media conglomerates have been slow to respond and grudging to intervene. Instead, it is established newspapers like ours and their websites which continue to be the political whipping boys, expected to submit to the most rigorous regulation and the threat of the most pernicious and damaging regime of court costs while they seek to pursue honest, investigative journalism in the public interest.

Unlike social media and the major digital platforms, this newspaper and its website are accountable for every single word we publish.

We have signed up to a comprehensive Editors' Code of Practice and we and all our staff have contractually bound themselves to its requirements.

This code encompasses everything from accuracy to privacy, harassment, intrusion into grief or shock, protecting children, reporting crime, and the use of clandestine devices and subterfuge.

It is explicit in the sensitivity we show in reporting suicides and protecting the most vulnerable in society, not least the victims of sexual assault.

That all costs money. When you buy our paper or advertise with us you are supporting the very journalism and quality that keeps integrity at the heart of all we do.

We make a real difference and our campaigns – particularly the latest one on potholes – have been heralded by readers. Our stories are what they purport to be: the genuine article. Fact – not fake.

Porridge oats the secret to Albert's 107 years

HE'S just turned 107 – making him the eighth oldest man in the country – and Kingswinford man Albert Taylor puts his health and longevity down to a good old bowl of steaming porridge every morning.

Born during the Edwardian age – in 1910 – the former toolmaker has lived through two world wars and and remembers a world without television.

But now Baggies fan Mr Taylor loves nothing better than watching the football or snooker on the box.

A former employee of Stuart's glassworks in Amblecote, Mr Taylor had two children with late wife Mary, Robert and Roger, and also has three grandsons, Andrew, Simon and Richard.

He turned 107 on Thursday, May 4. He still lives independently, spending one week at his home and the next with Robert in Shropshire.

"He has wonderful neighbours as well, particularly Jean his next door neighbour," said Robert. "Then, he will spend the week with me, recharge his batteries.

"He is the eldest of seven children and the rest have passed away. He puts his longevity down to porridge."

Born in Catshill, near Bromsgrove, Mr Taylor has lived in Kingswinford for more than 50 years and spent most of his working life as a toolmaker, which was his reserved occupation during the war.

"He left school at 14, and his wages were seven shillings and six-pence. After Stuart's, he cycled from Amblecote to Smethwick every day to work at Scrivens's cakes. He retired at 72."

He part in an over 60s keep fit group until he was 90. Robert added: "He is a little frail, being 107, but he loves watching his sport. He follows the football and is an avid snooker fan."

A bowl of steaming porridge each morning has helped Albert Taylor reach his 107 birthday in Kingswinford

NEWS IN BRIEF

Builders boost Beacon by £1,000

A SIGHT loss charity has received a £1,000 donation thanks to the fundraising efforts of a building contractor.

The Beacon Centre, based in Sedgley, received the funds from the Harper Group, which has bases in Rowley Regis and Leominster.

The firm raised the money through a year-long programme of activities which included sponsored runs, office dress down days, bake-offs, raffles and a Christmas jumper day, with more than 40 of the firm's office-based staff taking part in the activities.

High Street cycle link is now open

WORK on the latest phase of the Bilston High Street pedestrian and cycle link has been completed and it is now open to the public.

Temporary landscaping has been put in place ahead. The council acquired and demolished seven derelict properties, improved the ground conditions and dealt with shallow coal workings to pave the way for the works, which started in early February.

The design of the temporary scheme enables the open space to be used for events in the town.

Zoo open longer for two evenings

DUDLEY Zoo has announced two evening openings, this month and next.

The Castle Hill attraction will open until 8pm on May 13 and June 17, with last entry being 6.30pm.

Zoo manager Matt Lewis, said: "Our late night opening also provides the chance for visitors to see some of our species who become more active during late afternoon, including our giant anteater, porcupines, tapirs and chimpanzees."

From Wales to Black Country for hospice

FUNDRAISERS will walk 125 miles in two days from the Welsh coast to Stourbridge to raise money for the Mary Stevens Hospice.

The team will set off from Borth on May 19 and head for the Maverick pub in Amblecote.

The fundraisers aim to reach the pub by May 21.

The group are made up of Stourbridge residents and firefighters, who raised more than £8,000 for the hospice in 2016.

Addams Family on way

NEW comedy-horror musical The Addams Family, from the writers of hit musical Jersey Boys, is at the Birmingham Hippodrome from June 6 for five days. The show features Samantha Womack as Morticia, Les Dennis as Uncle Fester and Carrie Hope Fletcher as Wednesday.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

On yer bike – that is if you can afford it!

THE achingly right-on former Independent newspaper, which now exists in internet-only form, has put together a list of recommendations for people looking to get their first bike.

These include the Boardman CX Comp, which costs £650, and the Boardman Road Team Carbon, which will set you back an eye-watering £800. Which is strange, because I was under the impression that cyclists, and other environmental types for that matter, had a bit of a downer on carbon.

Anyway, if either of those are a bit pricey, there is also the Specialized Alles E5, which weighs in at a more modest £525. For the record, my first bike was a Raleigh Budgie, which was pretty good. And I'm sure it didn't cost £525.

❒❒❒

DID you see the joy etched on the faces of the Birmingham City fans as their final-day winner saw them escape relegation by the skin of their teeth?

As an Aston Villa supporter, you will forgive me for not sharing in their elation. Nor for that matter do I look forward to them spending the next three months banging on about 'Arry and how they will now conquer all before them.

But imagine they had been relegated. Do you think a single one of those fans would want to see their team merge with Villa, Wolves and Albion to create one single super-team able to compete in the Champions League?

Because that is one of the proposals put forward by Sion Simon, who was last week defeated by a whisker in the election for the West Midlands metro mayor.

And while Mr Simon didn't win, his idea perfectly illustrates the flawed thinking behind the combined authority.

Because just as Blues supporters like following Blues, Villa supporters like following Villa, and Wolves and Albion fans like following their clubs, regardless of how they perform on the field, exactly the same tribal loyalties exist in the towns and cities that make up the West Midlands.

People from Wolverhampton are proud of their identity as Wulfrunians, people from Dudley are proud to be Dudleians, and people from Walsall like being, well whatever you call people from Walsall. None of us have a shared "West Midlands" identity, and we are certainly not Brummies.

Congratulations to new mayor Andy Street, and we should all wish him well. But it doesn't alter the fact that I don't want him, or anybody else, as West Midlands mayor.

Be part of history, said the posters imploring us to get take part.

And I have. Proud to be one of the 74 per cent who didn't vote.

Money matters, mathematical mishaps and May-hem

New pound coins are reportedly falling apart, can't we go back to the note?

So it's this amount, says Dianne Abbott, whose maths skills were found lacking

Careful Donald! Hold on to that rail...the president is alleged to have a phobia of staircases

Making a note of coins' pound-ing

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

THE new £1 coin is causing problems, with some being cracked, misshapen or with the middle part missing. If £1 notes still work perfectly well in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Jersey, why on earth can't we restore them in England?

LOANS to kids by their parents – the so-called Bank of Mum and Dad – has become the ninth biggest mortgage lender in Britain. It also has the distinction of being the only mortgage lender that never seriously expects to get the money back.

A READER who was probably paying far more attention to the script of Line of Duty (BBC1) than the writers ever intended, did his own detective work when it was revealed that the incriminating bag of evidence was buried "on the Chase" near the junction of the A51 and the A38. He analysed the directions and found that the location was on the main road next to his house in Lichfield. Result.

LINE of Duty suffered from the same problem as Broadchurch (ITV). It was beautifully filmed and excellently acted but the plot was ludicrously complicated. At the conclusion of a truly great crime drama, you should relish the unmasking of the villain, admire the tying-up of loose ends and generally cherish the moment, without feeling the need to consult Google to find out what actually happened.

OUR old tabby has shed his winter weight. He celebrated his new-found agility this week by killing and eating two grey squirrels which would otherwise be devouring the eggs and fledglings of our local songbirds. The domestic cat – sinner or saviour? Discuss.

OXFORD University's Equality and Diversity Unit sternly advised students in a newsletter that avoiding eye contact could be regarded as a form of racism ("a racial microaggression") which can lead to "mental ill-health". The unit was forced to issue a humiliating retraction when readers pointed out that autistic people can find it hard to make eye contact. There are few funnier sights than the holier-than-thou dining on humble pie.

I ALWAYS have a special sympathy for those MPs appointed to that vast, all-embracing edifice, the Department for Culture, Media & Sport. At the inaugural press conference the new minister, appointed for his brilliant grasp of 18th century portraiture, is made to look a wally by the first grinning reporter who asks him to explain the offside rule.

DIANE Abbott's ordeal by mathematics, live on radio this week, is one excellent reason for avoiding a career in politics. We mere mortals cannot comprehend all the stuff that politicians are supposed to memorise and regurgitate at a moment's notice. You promise to appoint thousands of new coppers. The radio jock instantly demands to know how much it will cost. So that's what? Ten thousand multiplied by about £40,000? Your brain freezes. You blurt out £350,000. The jock starts the eye-rolling and guffawing, and within a minute the entire nation has joined in laughing at Abbott. Maybe the shadow home secretary should have been better briefed. Maybe she thought her trademark arrogance and bluster would see her through. And, yes, the media probably made too much of a meal of the incident. Abbott came a hideous cropper, living proof that in politics you never know what the next question will be.

AFTER my recent item on Donald Trump's alleged fear of staircases (bathophobia), a reader dug out a 1970 booklet owned by her late mother, a former psychiatric nurse. It listed no fewer than 94 medically recognised phobias. Today, 47 years later, Wikipedia lists 154 phobias and admits its list is incomplete.

WE'RE off to Scotland later this month. As anyone will tell you, Scotland can be glorious in May. The snag is that the glory may have started a wee bit early. The Highlands have been bathed in sunshine this week and, realistically, what are the odds of it staying fine for three more weeks? I fear we will arrive to that traditional Scottish greeting: "Och, you've just missed a lovely fortnight."

VINCE Cable, Simon Hughes and Edward Davey are three Lib-Dem knights accused of dropping the "Sir" while on the campaign trail, to make them appear more commonplace. If so, then Vinnie, Symie and Teddy are by no means the first. I recall a delightful old chap who was a Tory Member of the European Parliament in the 1980s. He answered to the rather grand name of John de Courcy Ling, except during elections when he was plain John Ling.

SO far in this campaign, Theresa May has been spared a wobble crisis. Margaret Thatcher's Wobbly Thursday fell during the 1987 General Election campaign when, hit by raging toothache and a sudden slump in the opinion polls, the Iron Lady suddenly feared she might lose the election. Polls are volatile and scary things and it would be surprising if Mrs May didn't have a moment like that in the weeks to come. PS: Wobble or not, Thatcher was still returned with an enviable majority of 102 seats.

TALKING POINT

ePrix can showcase electric car future

THE future of the car is driver-less, according to billionaire tech magnate Elon Musk. He says all new cars will be self-driving in 10 years.

Ford reckon the biggest change since the horse made way for the internal combustion engine will come even sooner, they plan to be mass-producing cars with no steering wheel, brake or accelerator within five years.

Already autonomous vehicles are being tested regularly on the streets of San Francisco – I would like to see them tackle its famously serpentine Lombard Street – and French car maker Peugeot has just launched a self-driving pilot scheme in Singapore.

It's a scary concept and not only if you are among the millions of cabbies, driving instructors, bus drivers and truckers who are facing a redundant future.

These cars will rely on GPS, sensors, computer-based and therefore, theoretically, hackable.

Imagine being held to ransom as your robot vehicle with hijacked AI (artificial intelligence) hurtles towards your potential doom.

But advocates of true self-driving cars, that don't even give passengers the option of grabbing the controls, say computers make better drivers.

Figures show that 94 per cent of the 35,000 traffic fatalities in the US in 2015 were down to human error.

Perhaps the real issue isn't who or what drives the car, but its power source.

According to the European Environment Agency the UK had 11,940 premature deaths in 2013 from nitrogen dioxide, which is a toxic gas mostly caused by diesel vehicles and linked to lung problems.

Driver-less or not, that sobering figure suggests we should be planning a network of charging points for a big switch to electric (at the least, hybrid) vehicles. The inventive Mr Musk is already ahead of the game with his battery powered Tesla cars.

Since its demise in 1990, there have been regular calls to bring back the Birmingham Superprix to the city's streets... surely it would be better to host an ePrix.

Formula E has been the catalyst for much of the technology in electric cars since it started in Beijing in 2014.

The racing car batteries can deliver 200 kilowatt of power (equivalent to 270 brake horsepower) and can accelerate from 0 to 60mph in three seconds.

Formula E events have already been held in Hong Kong, Marrakesh, Buenos Aires and Mexico City. Further rounds are planned for Paris, Berlin, New York and Montreal. The next is in Monaco on May 13.

How about the UK's own Motor City joining the race into the future? But include drivers, please.

LEON BURAKOWSKI

THE UNFAILING PROMISES OF GOD

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Motorway dog owner should face fine

RE 'This dog loves life in the fast lane'. So Keiran Samra said 'At the time it was horrible but now I'm laughing about it. I do feel a bit embarrassed because of the the delays everyone faced and the trouble the police went through but I'm glad he's safe'.

Finding it now funny and being a bit embarrassed is not good enough – what about all the drivers who missed appointments, went over on their tachograph driving hours, missed delivery slots and those that had to work over to compensate for the time spent on the motorway, etc?

Let's also not get into all the things the police could have been better deployed doing. I was delayed but was able to reschedule.

As it is the second time this dog has escaped from the family garden in recent weeks, I would suggest they improve the security of said garden. I also think a fine is appropriate in these circumstances. He is lucky people don't sue him for any losses incurred whilst sat on the motorway.

A BOTT
Halesowen

Zoo day out recalled 80 years on

IN 1937 my grandfather Melvyn Hunt was a five-year-old visiting Dudley Zoo for the first time with his parents. He managed to become separated from his mother and father. Assuming they'd simply gone home without him, grandpa walked himself all the way from Castle Hill to Wallbrook where his family lived. He's never forgotten that day – the sound of the sea lions sticks in his mind.

On the zoo's 80th anniversary, he tells the story with much amusement that as a little boy he worked out the two-mile journey between the zoo and his home by remembering the bus route. His parents, of course, were worried but relieved when they found him in the care of his grandmother. My grandpa is happy to think that Dudley Zoo is still running today, and looks back with fondness at the memories he made there all those years ago. He lives in Australia now with his wife, two children, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

JESSICA KIRKNESS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
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Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Code of Practice: Our policy is to correct errors as soon as we can. The Chronicles adhere to the Editors' Code of Practice, which can be seen at www.ipso.co.uk. If you are unhappy with the accuracy of a story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Removing recycling bins set to backfire

FURTHER to Dudley MBC's decision to close the twelve recycling points around the borough, saying that they only recovered 365 tons in the first six months of 2016/67, which they say will save them £45,000 per year. I worked that out at just over five tons per bin per month.

Seeing that on the council's website states that fly tipping is costing us tax payers £6 million per year, this saving is a drop in the ocean. If these bins are removed, the result will probably add more than £45,000 to the overall bill, which means that there is no saving in the long term.

I agree with Councillor Hartley that they are probably full if people are making the effort to visit the bins and leaving refuse at the side. Would it not be a good idea to paint the phone number on the bins to ring when bins are full or getting near to full? This is probably too easy a solution for Dudley Council.

PHIL CHERRINGTON
Dudley

Hospital's staff are hit in the pocket by charges

DISGUSTING is the only word.

I read with dismay the article, that the Russells Hall Hospital had made an extra £120,000 in car park fees from their staff – namely doctors, nurses and other staff – bearing in mind that in general hospital staff have only had a one per cent pay rise.

I felt absolutely disgusted that a hospital board could increase car park fees for these workers.

It borders on greed.

Everyone, including the public, who have to park on the hospital car park realise that they are being ripped off.

It is about time that this Government sorted this problem out.

When the Government got in during 2010, Cameron was going to deal with it. Hollow promises.

BOB WHITEHOUSE
Kingswinford

Supermarket trolly curse

THE curse of Asda trolleys.

A virtually permanent feature of where I live is stolen Asda trolleys.

I and other public-spirited citizens report these trolleys to Asda, but the response is disgracefully poor and it takes many days for their removal.

Recently, we had to endure six trolleys which were only removed following a complaint to Dudley Council.

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In 1917, they secured its future as a nature haven by buying and donating 156 acres of land to the National Trust in memory of their late parents.

It was one of the first grants to the conservation charity and, amid the First World War, a ceremony took place to mark the donation.

The family went on to donate a further 57 acres in 1942 with the National Trust continuing to acquire more land and the Rock Houses, carved out of the sandstone at Holy Austin Rock.

Sue Wright is Oliver Lee's granddaughter and chairman of Kinver Edge Committee

Oliver Lee in 1917 at the ceremony that helped to safeguard Kinver Edge

Ranger

The siblings continued to be supportive but it was Oliver, a solicitor, that played the biggest role, paying for a ranger on Kinver Edge and a lodge to be built on Comber Road.

Sue Wright is Oliver's granddaughter and for ten years has been chairman of the Kinver Edge Committee, which her grandfather was also instrumental in setting up in 1921.

She grew up visiting Kinver Edge having spent part of her childhood in the village and says it still holds 'an incredibly special' place in her heart.

"We used to come for picnics and because it was really sandy we would bring buckets and spades. It was almost like going to the seaside," said the 71-year-old, who lives in Harborne.

She added: "It's such a beautiful, peaceful and interesting place."

Speaking of the first donation, Mrs Wright said: "It was an extraordinary thing to do. They purchased the land from the Webb family, who were only too happy to sell it because they supported the family's plans and, within a week or two, handed it over to the National Trust. It was a green lung for the toiling masses of the Black Country and Birmingham.

"My family may have donated the first land but it's the community together with the volunteers and the National Trust who turned it into the place we can enjoy today."

The committee is organising events to celebrate the 100th anniversary and an appeal has been launched to raise £175,000 for a new walkway of accessible footpaths.

For more information email kinver edge@nationaltrust.org.uk or call 01562 712822. To donate to the Centenary Appeal go to www.justgiving.com/kinveredge

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Back to her best on the Thames, pleasure boat the Anne has been restored

Annie Gabb, rescued the boat which shares her name

PJ Darby at the stern of the Anne with, far right, Sammy Lewis, who died at Dunkirk

Troops crammed onto the little boats at Dunkirk

The Anne took part in celebrations in 2010 and 2012

Annie sails to rescue of Dunkirk hero boat that shares her name

FOR years Annie Gabb and her family assumed that her grandfather's boat, after which she had been named, had been sunk during the epic operation to rescue thousands of Allied troops from the beaches of Dunkirk.

Requisitioned by the Royal Navy, the 30ft pleasure cruiser built in 1925 was one of the heroic flotilla of "little ships" whose glorious exploits in 1940 are the stuff of legend. But the Anne was never to return home.

So when Mrs Gabb discovered two years ago that not only had the Anne survived, but was rotting away after failing to sell on eBay, it was time for a rescue of her own.

She bought the boat. And now an extensive, and expensive, restoration has borne fruit.

"It's cost a huge amount," said Mrs Gabb, who lives near Bridgnorth. "But it's been absolutely worth every penny.

Report by Toby Neal

"Why did I do it? It was probably a moment of madness. I felt that if there was a boat that I was named after which had been so brave, I didn't want her to die in a car park in Shepperton."

Grandfather

The Anne had belonged to her grandfather, P.J. Darby, who lived at Green Royde, Hagley, near Stourbridge, but who had a house on the Welsh coast at Tenby.

"She was a gentleman's coastal cruiser, a pleasure boat for my mother and grandfather and uncles and aunts. He was known as PJ, but his name was Percy."

When the Dunkirk crisis blew up, small boats were called into action to help evacuate Allied troops and the Anne was sailed from Tenby to Ramsgate by skipper Sammy Lewis, who later died in the operation on another boat. From there she sailed across to Dunkirk with a navy crew and although Mrs Gabb does not know the precise details, she would have been involved in repeatedly picking up soldiers from the beaches and taking them to larger ships waiting offshore.

She said: "She did have bullet holes in her and, being run up the beach, she had damage to her bottom."

Mrs Gabb knew of the story from her family. She said: "I was born in 1943 and in my childhood I always knew about grandpa's boat called the Anne. Because she never came back to Tenby, I presumed she had sunk. It turns out that she did come back, but never returned to Pembrokeshire."

Then, in June 2015, Mrs Gabb – whose name is Anne but is called Annie – was visiting Tenby with her children and grandchildren. At the lifeboat station, she got in conversation with a man about the Tenby boat that never returned. He encouraged her to find out what had happened to her.

She did. Through the internet, she discovered the Anne had taken part in the 2010 pilgrimage to Dunkirk as part of the 70th anniversary, and also in the Queen's golden jubilee celebrations on the Thames in 2012.

"After the jubilee she was towed up the river and left in Shepperton, abandoned. I found her there. She was in very bad order. One more winter uncovered and she would have been a pile of firewood. I bought her for very little and spent a year and a half having her restored."

The recent voyage of the restored Anne from Shepperton to a mooring at Windsor was Annie's first voyage on the boat she saved.

"My idea had been to give her to Tenby as a heritage thing. At my age, what do I want with a boat? But they couldn't give her a mooring. So I'm going to keep her at Windsor. They have a classic boat event at Henley, and I hope to take her to that and, in 2020, if I can still walk, I hope to take her back to Dunkirk for the 80th anniversary."

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Work starts on £12m training centre

At the ground breaking ceremony are, from left, Ian Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive for Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills; Colin Parker, Black Country Consortium; Paul Davis, Assistant Director of Estates and Facilities, Wolverhampton University, Adrian Adams, Director of Special Projects, Shaylor Group; and Martin Dudley, Chief Executive of Thomas Dudley Group Ltd

WORK has started on a £12 million manufacturing skills centre in the Black Country.

The first spade has been put in the ground for the Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills, based at the former Thomas Dudley factory site in Tipton. The University of Wolverhampton has appointed Midlands contractor Shaylor Group to build the centre. The 'foundry and pattern-making spoke' will provide a training facility adjacent to the existing Thomas Dudley foundry in Dudley Port, where students will have access to industrial facilities.

The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership approved £8m funding for the project.

Inspectors criticise school

A PRIMARY school has been told to improve.

Thorns Primary School Thorns Road, Brierley Hill, was rated as 'requiring improvement' by Ofsted at its inspection in March.

It 'required improvement' across four-out-of-five categories, but was rated good in another.

The overall inspection found faults with the standards of teaching and the development of pupils' education, but behaviour and politeness of pupils was praised. In its previous inspection by the education watchdog, held in March 2013, Thorns had been rated 'good'.

Categories that the school were told to improve included 'effectiveness of leadership and management', 'quality of teaching, learning and assessment', 'outcomes for pupils' and 'early years provision'. In a summary of key findings, an inspector said: "The quality of teaching is not consistently good."

It was also reported that: "Pupils behave well. They are polite and respectful to adults and each other. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is strong. Pupils feel safe in school. They are eager to learn. The proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development at the end of the reception year has increased and is now in line with the national average."

The school declined to comment.

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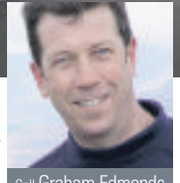

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Tip charges are to be reviewed

A CONTROVERSIAL 'tip tax' in Staffordshire is to be reviewed, the newly-elected Conservative chief has confirmed.

There has been uproar since the Tory-controlled Staffordshire County Council – which takes in Kinver and Wombourne – introduced charges for DIY rubbish at household waste centres in November.

The fees were branded 'illegal' by the Labour group. More than 1,000 people also backed a petition calling to 'scrap the Staffordshire Tipping Tax'.

Now, despite the Conservative landslide victory in the local elections, leader Philip Atkins has stated the fees will be looked at again. He said: "We will be reviewing the tip charges. We don't believe we are doing anything wrong at the moment, but we can have a look at that."

The new fees mean people have to pay £3 to dump a bag of soil or rubble and a £4 charge has also been brought in for plasterboard and tyres.

Mixed reaction as latest crime figures show ten per cent rise

COMMUNITY leaders have given a mixed reaction to figures which show reported crime has risen across the West Midlands.

The figures from the Office for National Statistics showed recorded offences had gone up 10 per cent in the West Midlands and 14 per cent in neighbouring Staffordshire.

The statistics, comparing 2015 with 2016, also show incidents of violence have risen in Staffordshire and West Midlands.

Councillor Patrick Harley, Conservative group leader at Dudley Council, said: "In Dudley, I think it is one of the safest places I know to live.

"We had some high profile incidents of knife crime in the past 12 months, and that is regrettable, but we try to work with police when there are spikes to keep levels low."

He added: "There are, of course, always improvements to be made."

Councillor Preet Gill, Sandwell cabinet member for public health and protection, said: "We need to be careful when taking in these figures. If more crimes are reported it may not just simply mean more are taking place. It can be that awareness has improved or trust in the police has gone up."

Councillor Sean Coughlan, leader of Walsall Council, said people living in Walsall did live in fear of crime. He said: "If you go to any community group, go to a meeting, speak to members, they will tell you they do not see enough police about. They will tell you they do fear crime. I'm afraid it is getting worse

But Christine Baron, secretary of the Stafford Borough Crime Prevention Panel, said: "I do get regular updates on the crime figures and I must say I'm surprised about this recent increase."

Councillor Patrick Harley

Roadworks at busy junction

DRIVERS can expect disruption and possible delays at a busy junction in Tipton when major roadworks get under way this summer.

Work to replace gas pipes at the junction of Bilston Road and Wednesbury Oak Road, near the Tipton Sports Academy, is scheduled to take place from July, it has been announced.

The project is expected to last four around four weeks and will see old iron pipes replaced with newer, more durable plastic pipes.

Temporary traffic lights will be in place, which is expected to lead to disruption for motorists in the area.

However the work,which will be led by Cadent, is expected to take place mostly through the school holidays which will help limit the problems.

Sky's the limit for Pc charity challenge

Black Country officer Pc Keith Tedds plans a skydive

AN OLDBURY police officer will be taking the plunge and doing a skydive to fund a defibrillator in memory of a man who died of a heart attack while out cycling.

Pc Keith Tedds, aged 33, who has served for 11 years in the force, is doing the skydive for the British Heart Foundation.

Colin Vaines died after suffering a heart attack while out on his bike cycling up a steep hill in Drayton Road. Pc Tedds, just behind him, saw him fall off his bike and immediately rushed over to help. He attempted CPR on Mr Vaines but he died at the scene.

Pc Tedds said: "It was upsetting but I had to do my job. It does hit you hard. I deal with a lot as a police officer but that was definitely the toughest moment of my life.

Pc Tedds wants defibrillators to be available in rural locations. The skydive is taking place at Skydive Tilstock in Whitchurch, Shropshire, on August 18. Father-of-two Pc Tedds is hoping to raise at least £1,000. To donate text 'TXOP77 £5' to 70070.

Partnerships key for new mayor, say CBI

BUSINESS leaders in the West Midlands have urged the region's new mayor to make boosting productivity the cornerstone of his first term of office.

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has welcomed Conservative Andy Street's victory in the first-ever election for West Midlands Mayor (see page 2), and says by forging partnerships with local businesses he can help to unlock regional growth. It comes as the region's universities called on Mr Street to work with them to develop a wider skills strategy for the region.

Mr Street was elected Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority on Friday after edging home in a close contest with Labour's Siôn Simon.

Richard Butler, CBI West Midlands director, said: "The new mayor will have responsibility for growing the region's economy at a critical time for both the West Midlands and the UK as a whole."

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New horizon of possibilities with dental implant therapy

COULD you ever imagine that after losing natural teeth, things could ever be quite the same again?

We all know that tooth loss can obviously impact on our choices of food, but there are many less visible problems too. Simply, losing teeth and having teeth that are failing can stop us living life spontaneously and enjoying ordinary things like meals out and, in some cases, having a good old laugh.

Although recent figures suggest oral health is improving, millions of UK adults suffer with tooth loss. It can be embarrassing, painful and erode self-esteem.

Practice Principal Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS(Eng) says: "We see almost on a weekly basis that failing teeth – both natural and dentures – can have a hugely corrosive effect on lifestyles."

Premium dentures

Solutions without using dental implants have been around for a long time. Dentures and bridges still offer excellent options, but the use of implants has now opened a wide range of solutions that should, if cared for, last a very long time.

Implant therapy is often a lifestyle investment and both denture patients and those with natural teeth can benefit.

Adds Steven: "If the patient is suitable, and few are not, dental implants whether for single or multiple teeth replacement, to support bridges, or to support a complete arch of teeth, can offer long-term solutions with generally very predictable clinical outcomes." For those with prosthetic stabilisation issues – the clinic regularly hears stories of dental fixative being an irritating, permanent necessity – implant retained prescriptions also offer excellent results.

"Our implant retained dentures have a bite comparable to natural teeth, look stunning, appear as natural teeth and deliver the patient a dental therapy where we can guarantee an end to denture stabilisation issues.

"Just two lower implants used to stabilise a lower over-denture can deliver strident changes in functionality for patients, " adds Steven.

All denture prescriptions are handcrafted on site in the clinic's laboratory using only premium quality materials and state-of-the art production methods.

Speaking of North Street's implant surgeon and general dentist, Owain Rees, Steven adds: "He's innovative, accessible . . . and a genuinely nice guy to meet."

Web link: http://northstreetdentalclinic.co.uk/our-services/implant-dentistry/

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It has been described as "the last frontier in implant dentistry" with the number of implants supporting a prosthetic drastically reduced, along with the rehabilitation time.

Traditionally up to eight implants could have been used to support a single arch in an often cost-prohibitive surgery procedure.

This alternative system provides the most cost-effective solution of permanently fixing replacement teeth. Your new replacement teeth will kook and feel more like your own than dentures ever could and you can lead a normal life very soon after surgery.

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All-on-4 implants are similar to their normal implant counterparts, but it is how they are positioned which makes them unique. The two implants at the front of the mouth are positioned at the normal angle of 90 degrees, while the two at the back are fixed at 45-degrees.

Simply, it means more bone is utilised in the support of the implants, allowing for multiple teeth to be fixed on them right away.

Web link: http://northstreetdentalclinic.co.uk/teeth-in-a-day-with-all-on-4/

Life-changing choices

Jacqueline Turgoose

• *Staff are approachable and friendly*

Vicky Ball

• *A combined 60 years of clinical service*

Norma Aston

• *Established reputation for implants*

CONFIDENCE, trust and an exceptionally good reputation for clinical work and care are helping reshape patients' lives at a Dudley dental practice.

With some 60 years' combined experience from its two key clinicians underpinning a large portfolio of "life-changing" decisions, North Street Dental and Implant Clinic continues to attract interest from all over the UK and beyond.

Recently, a patient from north Wales, who had researched dental implant work on the internet, made the trip to the North Street clinic for treatment.

Powerful fusion

A leading provider of implant solutions in the Midlands, the practice provides everything from general oral maintenance to highly complex surgical procedures with clinical lead, Owain Rees BDS DGDP (UK) Dip Imp Dent (UCL).

But it's the denture and implant work for which it is best known. Principal Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS (Eng) says: "People with oral problems gravitate towards us and I believe it's as much our accessibility as experience that attracts.

"My whole working career has been in denture provision and we have a reputation for being the Last Chance Saloon for people at their wits' end with failing teeth – whether dentures or native teeth.

"Working with Owain, who was in the vanguard of UK implant dentistry in the '80s, creates a powerful fusion of life-changing skills that are underpinned by our onsite laboratory and high-spec surgeries."

Early in his career Owain was exposed to implant work while working as a house officer in oral surgery at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.

"I placed my first in the late '80s and since then I've continued with a special interest in this field," he says.

Former community midwife Vicki Ball, whose treatment included two implants to stabilise a lower over-denture and the prescribing of high quality traditional upper dentures, is gushing with praise about her new look. She was initially attracted to the practice after reading through the clinic's patient experiences that are regularly published in the local newspapers. After reading about dental tourists who had disastrous experiences overseas, Vicki decided to book in for an initial consultation.

"From the very first time until the last visit I'd always been put at ease, always felt confident about all the people that are working here and always greeted with a smile and felt really welcome."

Her treatment from start to finish took 14 weeks, "but it was worth the wait," she says.

"When I first saw my teeth in the mirror, I thought they looked just like real teeth. My husband couldn't believe they were so good. Not to have to keep thinking about my teeth when I'm out is such a relief."

Salsa dancing enthusiast Norma Aston was also attracted to the clinic by Steven's media exposure. "I kept coming back to the advert in the paper," she says.

'Before I came [to the surgery] I went online and looked at the case studies. I knew Owain's reputation through my stepdaughter, who had been seeing him for quite a few years," she recalls.

But it was the face-to-face meeting with Steven that sealed her choice.

"His general demeanour and attitude to it all gave me the confidence and assurance that they could solve my problems," she says,

Norma, a vivacious 60-something-year-old, had experienced "troublesome teeth for years," but a picture snapped at a farewell party revealed jut how far forward her top teeth had migrated.

Norma's treatment plan included intravenous sedation, the placing of six lower implants to support a removable overdenture and a traditional upper denture prescription. Since her treatment Norma has remained an ambassador of the practice and is clearly happy with her smile. "I keep telling other people about it," she adds.

Kept press cutting

Jacqueline Turgoose, a youthful 70-something-year-old, was prescribed traditional, high quality upper dentures along with a removable lower overdenture, stabilised on two implants.

"I saw a piece in the paper five years ago about how Steven's work had sorted out some problems. I kept the press cutting."

The article focussed on stabilising dentures with implants. "It offered me hope that something could be done to help me and I kept the article all this time until I had the money to get my teeth fixed," she recalls.

Husband John adds: "It was a good decision and worth every penny."

Her experience with the clinic? "Every member of staff was lovely and so easy to talk to. They were all so very kind and the care was excellent," she adds.

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Good Golly, Miss Molly is an Irish dance star

A KINVER High School pupil has her eyes set on the World Championship title for Irish Dancing.

Molly Higgins, aged 17, has already been judged the top under-18 dancer from the UK in the World Irish Dance Championships in Killarney.

The teenager attends the Katie Collins School of Irish Dance which runs sessions at Kidderminster and Kinver.

She notched up second place for the world title at the event in County Kerry.

Molly has been a pupil at the dance school since she was nine and has previously taken titles as European Champion and Scottish Champion, along with a multitude of regional championship wins.

She consistently gains top five places in British, Irish, Scottish, All Ireland, German and World Championships events. In the run-up to the competition, Molly was training as much as five days each week.

Katie Hulagu, who has been running the dance school for 12 years, said: "I was so thrilled with Molly's second place at the Worlds. We have been working towards that for the last few years and she is now hoping to better that next year and get that world title. Our next competition, however, is the All Ireland Championship in Limerick in June.

"Molly would love to dance in a professional show, such as Riverdance, when she finishes her education. We have had several pupils win major championships. I run five classes each week in Kidderminster, Kinver and Stourbridge as well as an adults class."

See www.katiecollinsschool.com

Kinver schoolgirl and Irish dancer Molly Higgins, aged 17, with her trophy won in County Kerry

Yeltz start work on major Grove revamp

A BLACK Country football club has announced it will be carrying out a revamp of its stadium over the summer.

Halesowen Football Club will be carrying out work to improve the playing pitch of The Grove, alongside the irrigation of the ground and fencing around the stadium.

The work on the pitch was starting last week, when contractors were removing the top player of grass and soil before levelling the ground ready for a new surface.

The club has invested in a new sprinkler system, including a water tank and pump, to improve irrigation. Installation work was also due to begin last week.

The fencing around the perimeter of the stadium will be replaced as the section between Old Hawne Lane and Stourbridge Road which has fallen into disrepair.

A spokesman for the club said: "The proposed work represents a large financial investment from the club without affecting next season's playing budget. Although we will be bringing in contractors to carry out most of this work your help over the summer will be greatly appreciated and we will be posting regular updates on the website detailing the work the clubwill be undertaking."

Staffing levels at hospital 'not safe'

STAFFING at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley has not been at a level considered safe at times during the last six months.

Safe staffing levels had not been fully achieved on occasions between October and last month due to recruitment struggles, sickness and intense A&E pressure, according to a report.

Dudley Group NHS Trust bosses have said it is 'looking at ways to recruit more substantive staff to support our existing workforce'.

By Richard Guttridge

The hospital is emerging from an extremely difficult winter, which saw numbers coming to A&E reaching record levels.

Hospital chiefs have struggled to recruit workers to bolster the workforce, while sickness levels also increased during the winter.

The trust's sickness rate was above four per cent for the final quarter of 2016/17, higher than the 3.5 per cent limit set by NHS chiefs.

Challenges

The report said of safe staffing levels: "This has not been achieved due to ongoing recruitment challenges, continual winter pressures and capacity issues. Staff are moved to support patient safety and mitigate any risks."

A knock-on effect of the staffing situation at the hospital has been an increased reliance on agency workers.

Bosses said agency staffing remained a problem 'despite regular recruitment initiatives, introduction of trainee nursing associates and improved management of sickness'.

The hospital struggled to cope during the Christmas period and was forced to issue a plea for people only to attend if they had a serious condition.

Diane Wake, trust chief executive, said: "Patient safety is always our priority and we always try to meet national guidelines for safe staffing.

"However, on occasions where demand on our services has been unprecedented, we have had to open extra beds for emergency patients and move staff around to keep patients safe. We also employ bank and agency staff and deploy matrons to work clinically, providing direct patient care, when demand is high.

"Our priority is to ensure we provide safe care for all of our patients and we continually monitor staffing levels on all wards on a shift by shift basis to make sure we have the right staff in place to provide appropriate care for patients."

She added that Interim Chief Nurse Siobhan Jordan was looking at ways to recruit more staff.

Charity in call to fill new volunteer roles

A CAMPAIGN has been launched by the Beacon Centre to encourage new volunteers to join its ranks.

The Sedgley-based charity already has more than 250 volunteers who offer support for those living with sight loss across the region.

Now a series of new roles have become available, including in Stourbridge the chance to volunteer with the charity's home visiting service or in its day centre. There are retail positions at the centre's shops in Wednesbury, Penkridge and Bloxwich.

There is also a chance to offer technology support to those who want to learn how to use a computer or to volunteer at the eye infirmary in Wolverhampton.

Beacon Centre volunteer co-ordinator Becky Sinar said: "Whether someone has two hours or 10 hours spare we have a role that could suit them." Call Becky on 01902 880 111 or email bsinar@beaconvision.org

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Three are jailed for roles in guns and bullets deal

A MIDDLE man between Albanian gangsters and Midland drug dealers who bought two handguns and ammunition is starting a 14 year jail sentence.

Khalad Uddin 'pulled the strings' when his courier – Sadaqat Ali – collected the arms cache from a former soldier who used to stand guard at Buckingham Palace. Ex-guardsman Jermal Simpson met Ali for the hand over in the car park behind a Spar store in Lawnswood Road, Kingswinford on August 3 last year.

But police watched the transfer take place and were waiting when Ali returned to his home in Madeley Road, Dudley, four minutes after leaving the meeting.

The two 9mm guns and 12 live rounds of ammunition were in an Adidas shoe box in the passenger foot well of the VW Sharan.

Simpson's Seat was stopped by armed police in Moss Grove, Kingswinford, minutes later. Almost £2,000 cash was hidden under one of its seats.

Father-of-four Sadaqat Ali, from Dudley, sent to prison for six years

Ex-guardsman Jermal Simpson – jailed for seven and a half years

Jacket

Mobile phones taken from the arrested men revealed Ali had been making and receiving calls to and from Uddin before collecting the weapons.

The 35-year-old admitted passing on cash from Midland drug dealers to the Albanian criminals but denied involvement in the gun deal.

A bullet proof jacket was found at his home in Scholars Mews, Oxford on October 19 when he was arrested.

The jury unanimously convicted him and a 26-year-old man, who cannot be named for legal reasons, of conspiracy to transfer firearms and ammunition.

Uddin admitted being part of a conspiracy to supply cocaine with a gang whose 'tentacles' stretched from London to the West Country and the Midlands, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

Judge Nicholas Webb told the defendant: "The gravity of gun crime cannot be exaggerated.

"Your role extended to getting firearms and ammunition.

"You wanted these for others, and possibly yourself.

"You and the 26-year-old man arranged for your agents to meet up."

The jury unanimously convicted him and the 26-year-old man of conspiracy to transfer firearms and ammunition.

Simpson, aged 24, from Parker Street, Bloxwich, who struggled to find work after leaving the army, was acquitted of conspiracy to transfer firearms and ammunition but found guilty of selling or transferring the weapons and bullets and being in possession of money from criminal activity.

Package

It was accepted that Simpson might have believed the package held a half kilo of cocaine rather than weapons. He was jailed for seven and a half years.

Father-of-four Ali, aged 35, had pleaded guilty to acquiring or purchasing the guns and ammunition and was sent to prison for six years.

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Ladies take walloping in bowls game

Wollaston E TWG

THERE were 35 members in attendance at the April meeting with chairman Julie Willetts in charge.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and agreed as a true record. The chairman then welcomed new committee members and introduced the full committee to the membership.

Suggestion slips were given out requesting ideas for future activities, in which fellow members may be interested. Treasurer Margaret Gregory gave a favourable report on the group's financial position.

The Federation annual dinner will take place on Monday August 7 at the Copthorne Hotel and a booking board will be available for members wishing to attend. A visit to Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford on August 24, at a cost of £17.50, is also in the offing.

The bowls section enjoyed a competitive morning of matches with the Sons of Rest bowlers which ended in a walloping for the ladies.

Brenda Adkin was wished a speedy recovery after her recent hip operation.

The speaker for the evening was Paul McGuire, a former BBC warm-up man, who gave a very interesting and amusing talk, relating to artists and incidents that occurred in his line of work. Members felt he should be asked to make a return visit.

Raffle prizes went to Joy Cook and Janet Hodder.

Monies owing for the annual dinner at Hagley Country Club should be paid at the next meeting.

Cracking talk from Easter meeting guest

Chairman Ann Rogers, left, with two members and speaker David Berry

Dudley South Ladies Luncheon Club

IN April, chairman Ann Rogers welcomed 36 members to a special Easter themed lunch. Members enjoyed an excellent meal of pate, roast lamb and apple pie at brightly coloured tables bedecked in yellow.

Jill Buchan and her sister June Weaver were kept very busy on the bring and buy stall with items coloured yellow or white.

To complete the popular Easter meeting speaker David Berry, with his talk on 'Humour in Retirement', had every member laughing. With tongue-in-cheek he explained what happens to us once we draw our pensions, interspersing such tales of woe with jokes and stories.

In fact his great sense of humour proved to be the best tonic to cure all ills. Retirement is when our priorities change from earning money to enjoying life.

Meetings are held the second Friday each month at The Lodge, Wellington Road, Dudley 12pm for 12.30pm. The speaker on May 12 will be Ned Williams talking about The King of Showmen and in June Patricia Boyd on Bantock House Museum, followed by a return visit of Michael Taylor, well-known local author, speaking about The Fact in Fiction on July 14.

Committee to remain in situ

West Mids Federation

AT the West Midlands Federation of Townswomen AGM on April 19 in the Amblecote Room at Stourbridge Town Hall, chairman Margaret Tew gave a warm welcome to committee members, president Christine Yorke and past presidents, and to delegates and observers representing guilds within the federation.

Secretary Hazel Butt presented minutes from the past year which were read, accepted as a true record and duly signed. The present committee have all offered to remain in office for a further 12 months.

The next event will be the National AGM being held at Sheffield City Hall on June 21. Six members of the Federation will be attending.

The Federation luncheon is being held this year at the Copthorne Hotel, Brierley Hill on August 7 when the guest speaker will be Sue Hickman who will be giving a talk entitled 'Crossing the Andes on horseback'.

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Blaze is caused by pan on stove

A MAN has to be rescued from a kitchen blaze in his Stourbridge home caused by a saucepan that was left on the stove.

The fire in Wollaston had threatened to spread through the house during the early hours of the morning on Friday but was caught in time by fire crews.

Fifteen firefighters tackled the blaze at a house in Meriden Avenue at around 2.15am.

The man was led to safety and was checked over by paramedics but did not need to go to hospital.

The fire caused damage to the kitchen but it had been extinguished by around 2.45am.

West Midlands Fire Service spokesman Matthew Smith said a pan had been left on the stove in the kitchen and that was the cause of the fire.

Firefighters remained at the scene for a couple of hours to make sure that it was safe.

Public step up to pay hospice repair bill after series of raids

IT was a string of crimes that shocked the Black Country.

Six Compton Hospice charity shops were targeted by thieves in the space of less than three months.

The offenders broke windows and sky lights to get in the shops. But they left empty-handed from many of them. The damage, however, caused by the raids left the charity with a £3,500 repair bill.

Two months on, thanks to support from the public, £1,195 has been raised for work to repair the damage.

A Just Giving page was set up by the charity, which thanked those who supported the drive. Among those who donated was volunteer worker Steph Rudge. She said: "Compton is a wonderful place and the shops are fantastic, and the volunteers do a great job."

One anonymous donor said: "I hope you reach your target so you can continue to do your amazing work, serving the people who need it most."

The stores targeted were in Brierly Hill, Wolverhampton, Willenhall, Codsall and Cannock.

At the Birches Bridge store, in Codsall, the raiders smashed through a skylight. They broke through a wall inside but left with nothing after being unable to get inside the safe.

At Trysull Road in Merry Hill, Wolverhampton, raiders got into the store on through a rear window. The safe was damaged but unopened.

At the time of the raids, Paul Carter, trading manager, said: "We won't be beaten and we appeal to our supporters and our donors to continue to pledge their support by donating their wares and their time as volunteers to help us recover the losses we have experienced."

Soon after the launch of the fundraising drive, the charity thanked supporters from its Twitter account. A spokesman said: "Thank you to everyone for your kind words, donations and offers of help. We're so incredibly grateful."

The charity provides care and support for families living with incurable illnesses.

Centres cover areas across Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and South Staffordshire, as far as east Shropshire.

The Beat's Saxa dies, aged 87

BIRMINGHAM musician Saxa, who was saxophonist for ska-pop band The Beat, has died aged 87.

Born Lionel Augustus Marti, Saxa was nearing 50 and an already established Jamaican session musician when he was recruited by the band in the late 1970s.

His melodic style was a crucial part of The Beat's sound, which yielded such hits as Mirror In The Bathroom, Tears Of A Clown, Too Nice To Talk To and Can't Get Used To Losing You.

When the Beat broke up in'83, Saxa played on records by both splinter groups, Fine Young Cannibals and General Public, and went on to play in The International Beat and other groups, and with ska and reggae stars such as Laurel Aitken, Prince Buster, and Desmond Dekker.

Jon put focus on speedway

Photographer Jon George recently had an exhibition of speedway photos on show

AT ONE time it was one of the most popular spectator sports in the country. And to this day speedway draws a consistent and loyal fan base, particularly in the Black Country where Wolverhampton Wolves and Cradley Heathens ply their trade at Monmore.

The high-octane sport was recently the subject of a photography exhibition that was on display at Wolverhampton Central Library. It comprises dozens of snaps which have been captured by Jon George and his friends from Compton G Camera Club based at Tettenhall Wood Institute.

Most of the images were taken at Wolverhampton's Monmore Green Stadium, where promoter Chris Van Straaten allowed the photographers an unobstructed view from the centre of the track. Others were taken by Jon at the Haynes International Motor Museum, in Somerset. Its Forshaw Speedway Collection features a wealth of speedway bikes and memorabilia.At the museum Jon came across the story of Irish speedway rider Fay Taylour, known as Flying Fay.

Jon, 68, of Wolverhampton, said: "In the 1920s there was a couple of notable women riders. One was Fay Taylour and she was an exceptionally good rider. I believe she held the track record at Crystal Palace and beat a lot of the male riders. In the 1930s they decided to ban women from speedway and one reason given was that if they were involved in an accident it could be awkward if the medics had to remove their clothing."

Comedian's show is brought forward

COMEDIAN and actor Russell Brand has announced his stand-up show in Wolverhampton will take place nearly a year earlier than planned.

The comedian will appear at the Civic Hall on December 20 this year – rather than November 1, 2018, the date which was previously revealed.

Announcing the rescheduled date, he cited 'unavoidable commitments of both a professional and personal nature'.

Brand's new tour, RE:BIRTH, promises tackle the matrix of modern media, politics, sex, fatherhood and death. The comic is no stranger to controversy and in recent years has become involved in political activism.

Brand's other tours include 2006's Shame, 2007's Only Joking, 2009's Scandalous and 2013's hMessiah Complex. He recently returned to the airwaves with Radio X after leaving the BBC in 2008. He also plays Birmingham Symphony Hall on December 5 this year.

Wildlife bid for funding

A WILDLIFE trust which carries out work to protect natural habitats in the Black Country has been shortlisted to receive funds from a supermarket.

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country, which cares for the Portway Hill Nature Reserve at Rowley Hills, is up for funding from the Tesco Bags of Help initiative. The charity has been shortlisted and is urging the public to vote for it online at www.tesco.com/bagsofhelp website.

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Enjoy top note Robin 2 line-up

Dave Hill – Slade in 'ome town show'

Midlands rock legends Magnum

ONE of the Black Country's most popular venues has unveiled a packed line-up for the rest of the year with legendary names from a host of musical genres.

The Robin 2 at Bilston has released a packed guide to all of the shows booked from now until early next year.

A highlight will see the return of Spandau Ballet heartthrob Martin Kemp on July 4. Radio presenter Paul Franks will be hosting An Audience with Martin Kemp. which will include an hour long Q&A when fans get to quiz their favourite bassist. Tickets are £20 or £22.50 on the door.

There are also some exclusive backstage Meet and Greet tickets for fans to have photographs and autographs with the musician and actor for £20.

Anniversary

Also talking about his many years in the music industry, on September 24, will be the once-spiky haired icon of the eighties Nik Kershaw. He is back on the road with the all-seated An Evening with Nik Kershaw show following the success of his Me, Myself and I tour in 2014. Tickets are £25 or £27 on the door.

2017 marks 25 years since the Robin 1 opened in Brierley Hill. The venue, which closed in 2003, will be remembered at the Robin 2 on July 14 with a performance by one of the bands that started it all – Soul Survivors. And, the good news for music lovers is admission is at 1992 prices, £5 a ticket or £6 on the door. Ex-staff can get in free by contacting the box office.

The Skids stop off at the Robin on their 40th anniversary tour. Big hits for The Skids included Into the Valley, Sweet Suburia and The Saints are Coming. Also marking an anniversary is entertainer Richard Digance, marking 50 years of songs and stories that led to him getting a BAFTA nomination, with his Golden Anniversary 2017 show on September 6.

Joining the Robin line-up – Martin Kemp, Nik Kershaw and Heather Small

Eighties favourites T'Pau fronted by Shropshire girl Carol Decker, is there on July 6 offering 'a rare full band show' and covering such chart toppers as China in Your Hand and Heart and Soul followed up shortly afterwards on July 16 by another 80s chart hit, Hue & Cry who had a huge hit with the track Labour of Love.

Bank Holiday Sunday, May 28, brings an all-day Slade Convention including a Q&A with John Steele from the Animals and executive producer for Slade in Flame. The evening will see tribute band Slyde performing all of their hits. An afternoon and evening ticket is £18 on the door.

And there is a treat for fans later in the year when Slade featuring Dave Hill and Don Powell perform for a 'ome town show' on December 15 because of course it's Chreeest-muss! Canadian singer/songwriter Ron Sexsmith appears on May 22. Tickets are £29.50 on the door. Fellow canadian singer Lee Aaron is on July 17.

Ex Rainbow and Schenker star Graham Bonnet brings his band to the venue on July 27 and two days later the Midlands rock legends Magnum hit the stage in what is likely to be a sell-out. And stalwart US rock band Living Colour perform on September 27. US AOR band Harline are on May 23 celebrating their 25th anniversary of debut album Double Eclipse.

Dr Feelgood is in a double header with Eddie and the Hot Rods on May 26. Dr Feelgood had such hits as Milk and Alcohol and Roxette while Eddie and the Hot Rods had the top 10 hit Do Anything You Wanna Do. From the Jam are back on June 2 with former bassist with The Jam Bruce Foxton joined by guitarist Russell Hastings and The Alarm drummer Steve Smiley Barnard. The voice of M People, Heather Small, is at the Robin 2 on October 14 performing many of the band's hits such as Moving on Up and Search for The Hero. Tickets are £29.50 or £31.50 on the door.

Eighties favourites Carol Decker of T'Pau

The busy line-up for the Robin 2 runs into the Christmas season and beyond with highlights including soul legends Shalamar on November 8 and The Real Thing on November 17 as well as Les McKeown of Bay City Rollers on November 24.

China Crisis on November 26 and Go West on December 2 promise some more hits from the 80s while Boney M are lined up for December 16.

Chase and Dave are at the venue on December 23 while Bad Manners bring their ska sound on December 27. A host of tribute bands are lined up with one of the interesting being Blobbie Williams offering his own take on the Robbie Williams hits.

Visit www.therobin.co.uk for details or ring 01902 401211 for tickets.

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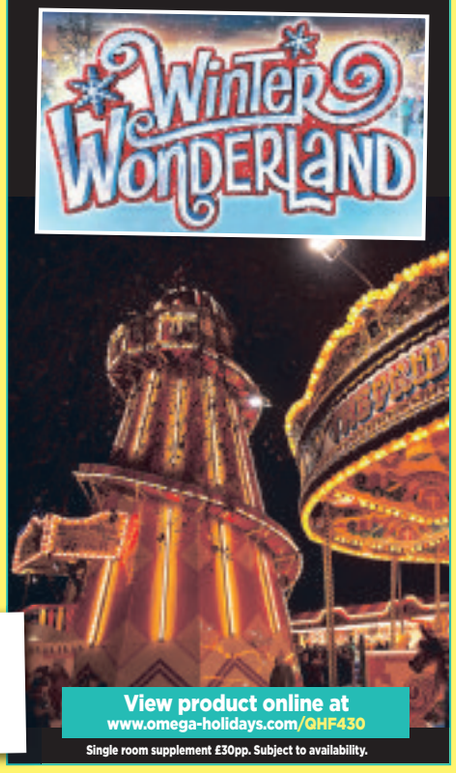

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Stay independent with help to get your home adapted

Commercial feature

Dudley Council is offering help to Dudley borough residents who need to adapt their homes to better meet their needs.

Anyone who is struggling with daily life in their home can ask for help. If a member of the household of any age is having difficulties bathing, getting upstairs, even getting into the home, help is on offer to adapt the property to better meet these needs.

Dudley Home Improvement Service, part of Dudley Council, offers the adaptations package. Grants are available to pay for adaptations, along with an adaptations package of advice and practical support. This consists of an expert recommendation, support to design and build the adaptation from technical officers and council approved builders. All work is overseen by the council, so there is no hassle and no stress to people.

Home adaptations for independence are available to people who own their own homes or are private rental tenants. Council tenants can already request adaptations to their homes through the council. The aim is to help people stay independent in their homes. Typical adaptations include handrails, stair rails, ramps, level access showers, stair lifts, through-the-floor lifts, even home extensions to provide extra sleeping or bathing facilities.

An initial assessment by an occupational therapist will take place and this will establish the type of adaptation needed to suit a person's needs and to help them stay independent and safe in their home.

Anyone who is struggling should ask for help from the adaptations service

The service offers adaptations to people of any age. Full grant funding is always provided for adaptations needed for children under 18.

Alan Lunt, Dudley Council's strategic director of place said: "Anyone who is finding it difficult to manage in their home, or has a member of their household who is struggling should ask for help from the adaptations service. Lots of support is on offer, along with grant funding to pay for home adaptations for many people. It's all about keeping people safe and independent in their homes and making life more liveable."

Contact Dudley Home Improvement Service on 0300 555 0055.

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Struggling in your home? Are you or a member of the family having difficulties bathing, getting upstairs, or even getting into your home?

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Dudley Council offers grants to pay for adaptations*, uses reputable, approved tradespeople and can arrange all works for you.

*Dependant on criteria

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Dudley

DUDLEY HOME IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

Ernest, in what was called hospital blues, the patch on his jacket marks that he had been awarded a medal

The military medal for bravery, centre, along with Star medal and Victory medal

Grandchildren, brothers John and Alan Russell, with sister Pat Parsonage

100 years on and story of a war hero is finally told

PICKEN
Ernest
15 F/2Bde 505 Diembi 13-1-1
France
5.3.15

This document shows that Ernest Picken was fighting in France in 1915

THE story of a Black Country war hero is finally being told, 100 years on from him receiving one of the UK's most prestigious medals.

MEMORY LANE

By Jack Averty

Ernest James Picken, born and bred in Bloxwich,, was a coal miner turned soldier who fought across France and Belgium during the First World War.

He was awarded the Military Medal for bravery in the field after staving off a German counter-attack while in the trenches near Loos in France, despite being shot. But until now his story has remained untold, mainly because his family had no idea about his heroic past until they began researching.

Born in 1891, Mr Picken lived on Elmore Row near Elmore Green for most of his early life. At the age of 19 the 1911 census listed him as a coal miner/underground horse cart driver.

He joined the South Staffordshire Regiment in 1914 and remained a soldier in the First World War until the first quarter of 1919. His campaign in the Great War saw him fight across both Belgium and France, but it is the latter where he received his Military Medal for bravery.

On June 8, 1917 he 'showed great courage and initiative' as he fought off a German counter-attack, and was wounded in the process. He was recommended for immediate reward and was awarded the Military Medal not long afterwards.

The citation reads: "During a raid in the hostile trenches he showed great courage and initiative and set a splendid example to his men."

Return

The citation also notes that Mr Picken was wounded and forced to return to England. It was in hospital that the only photograph the family have of him was taken.

As well as his Military Medal, Mr Picken was also awarded the 1914/15 Star, the Victory Medal 1914-1919 and the Silver War Badge. His family do not think the other three medals were awarded for anything specific, other than his participation in the war. While back in the UK following his injuries in France, he attended a central infantry course in September 1917 and was rated very good or above average in every category. His bayonet fighting instruction was highly praised.

While in the army he was a keen boxer and notes found by his surviving family show he won a competition at some stage.

After the war Mr Picken, who had six grandchildren and lived to meet the first five, returned to Bloxwich and to his wife Rhoda Elizabeth, whom he had married shortly before the war, and his daughter Bessie, who was born in January 1913.

Not much is known of his life after the war, however he did move from Elmore Row to an area just off Field Road. To help make ends meet he boxed occasionally at Pat Collins fairground just around the corner.

He died in 1955. He had suffered from ill health throughout his life after the war after being gassed in the trenches.

His tale of bravery has only come to light after his granddaughter, 65-year-old Pat Parsonage from Bloxwich, began researching his life after being made the guardian of his medals following the death of her mother and his daughter Bessie, aged 97.

Ernest's wife Rhoda Elizabeth is seen with her daughter Bessie

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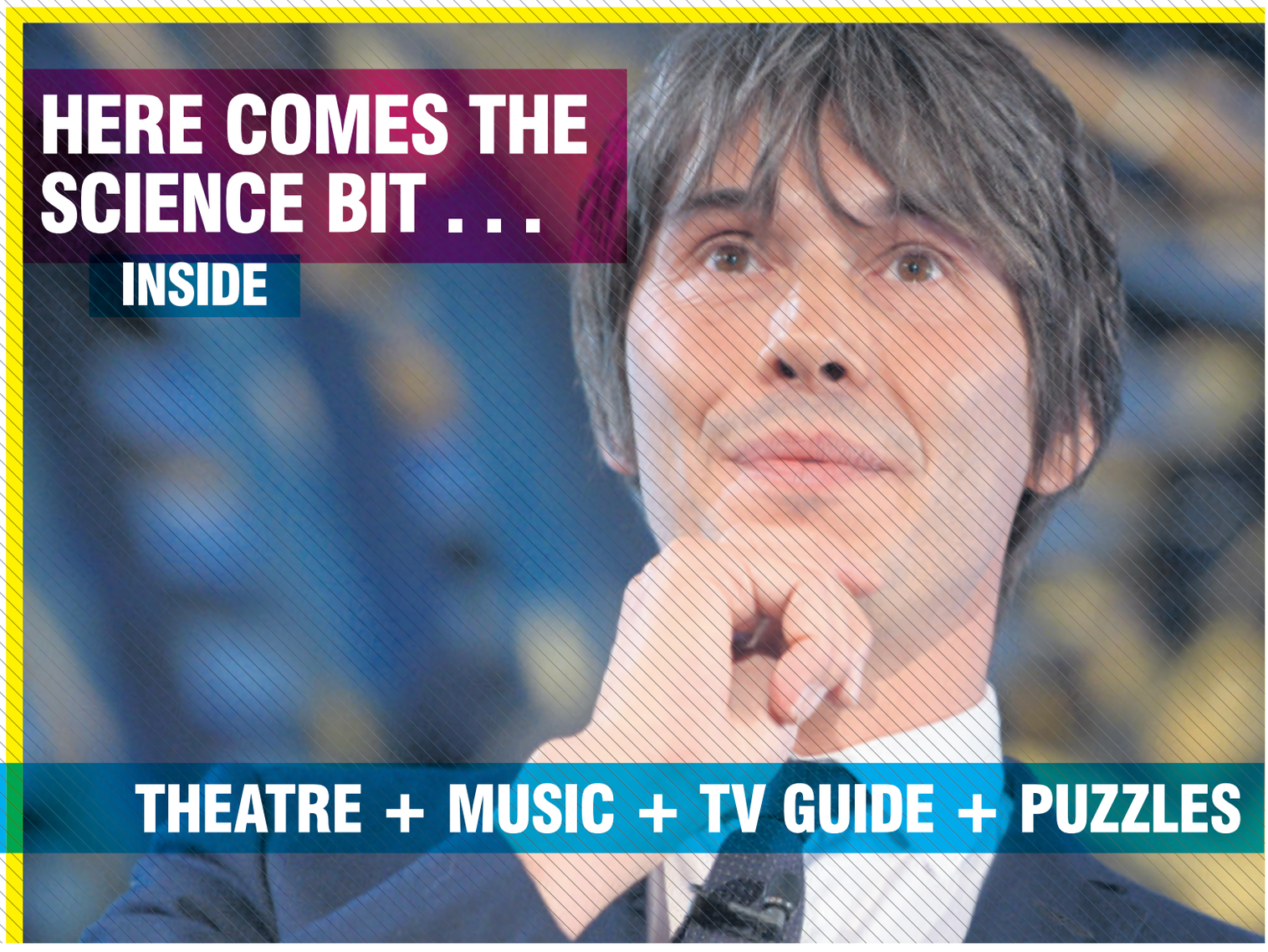
The Ticket



HERE COMES THE SCIENCE BIT . . .

INSIDE

THEATRE + MUSIC + TV GUIDE + PUZZLES

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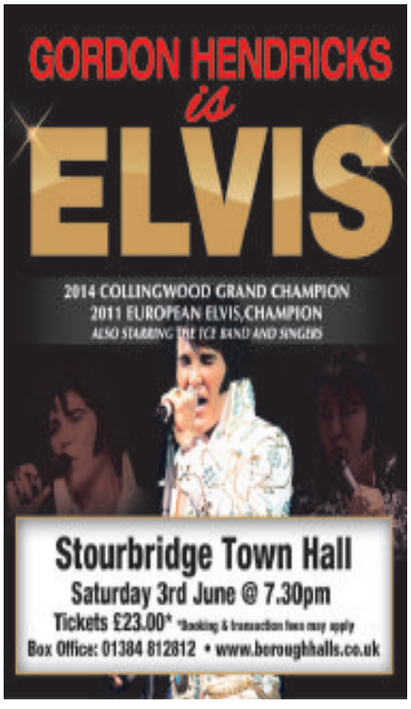


Professor Cox: I'll talk weird science

The world record for tickets sold for a science show was held by Professor Brian Cox. That was until another man came along and smashed it to smithereens.

His name was, you guessed it, Professor Brian Cox.

The multiple-world-record holder sold 75,000 for a previous tour. But his latest Professor Brian Cox Live shows will seem him performed to around 150,000 people – twice as many as his previous run.

And Brian can't wait to get into some of the UK's biggest venues – including Birmingham's Barclaycard Arena tonight – to talk about science.

He will take audiences on a dazzling journey through space and time, delving into 'high science' and freewheeling on the edges of the known cosmos. Whether an avid science reader or a total novice, Professor Brian Cox Live will test the limits of our knowledge and make highly complex ideas accessible to all.

He plans to take science to a new dimension in a show hosted by Infinite Monkey Cage co-host Robin Ince.

Brian's excited about the prospect of hitting the road because he would be able to use massive screens to properly showcase the 'beautiful' high resolution imagery of various galaxies from the Hubble Space Telescope.

He says: "The exciting thing about these, from the (shows) before Christmas, we're in really big venues.

"We have a really big screen, a ridiculous screen – it's a state of the art LED display, it's something like 30m wide and 15m high.

INCREDIBLE

"It's huge, and what you realise is the images we've now got from the Hubble and Cassini, which has been in the news a lot over the last few weeks, they're such incredible high-res images, when you put them on screens like that and fill arenas with them, they look spectacular.

"I don't think anyone ever gets a chance to do it, to give them the presentation they deserve because they are beautifully detailed, and that's the most exciting thing."

Brian has presented numerous science programmes for the BBC and has been described by Sir David Attenborough as his natural successor. He has spoken about astronomy and physics and hopes to give people the enthusiasm to learn.

He says: "They will know more in the sense that they might not have thought about the vastness of the universe, but one of the only things you can aim to do in a show is to trigger a desire to learn more, because you can't even begin to scratch the surface of what we know."

On his present tour, he hopes to answer people's questions about the meaning of life and the possibility of aliens with his shows.

"That's why I'm doing this tour, so I can answer them once and for all. I should add that I don't know the answer to either of those questions – I'll give my opinion."

Brian has been thrust into the spotlight and some have questioned the way science has moved into the mainstream and been used as entertainment.

Let's get physic-al – Professor Brian Cox talks science

However, he believes it is healthy for people to learn more – providing they are basing their opinions on fact.

"One has to be careful when communicating uncertainty in science, especially in politicized areas such as climate science. The reason is that uncertainty is often misunderstood and occasionally misused by self-styled 'on-line magazine editors' or opinion formers 'who are always right' – you know the sort.

"But surely it isn't a bad thing to challenge a scientific theory or prediction? Isn't the reason for the success of science the fundamental axiom, if you like, that all theories or predictions MUST be falsifiable, and are NEVER to be assumed to be absolutely correct? And doesn't the very requirement of the falsifiability of any theory or prediction demand that someone should try to falsify them? Yes, to all of the above.

"BUT, there is statement that I believe to be correct, and can be made with certainty. It is this: The consensus scientific view is the best we can do at any given time, given the available data and our understanding of it.

"It is not legitimate and certainly of no scientific value (although there may be political value) to attack a prediction because you don't like the consequences, or you don't like the sort of people who are happy with the prediction, or you don't like the people who made the prediction, or you don't like the sort of policy responses that prediction might suggest or encourage, or even if you simply see yourself as a challenger of consensus views in the name of some ideal or other. It is only appropriate to criticise a prediction or theory based on specific criticisms of the data, methodology or the underlying theoretical framework. It is content-less to criticize a scientific prediction because you don't like it."

> *We have a really big screen, a ridiculous screen – like 30m wide and 15m high*

Brian was born in Oldham and now lives in London after writing, or co-writing, more than 950 scientific publications. He was an entertainer before becoming a TV scientist, playing the keyboards for D:Ream and Dare.

He's won numerous awards and in 2002 he was elected an International Fellow of The Explorers Club and in 2006 he received the British Association's Lord Kelvin Award for this work.

He held a prestigious Royal Society University Research Fellowship from 2006 to 2013 and in 2010 won the Institute of Physics Kelvin Prize for his work in communicating the appeal and excitement of physics to the general public.

He was appointed OBE in the Queen's 2010 Birthday Honours for services to science and in 2011, he won Best Presenter and Best Science/Natural History programme by the Royal Television Society for Wonders of the Universe. A year later, he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Open University.

● **For more entertainment news see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.**

John Partridge and Adrian Zmed in La Cage aux Folles

Glamour is such a drag in La Cage Aux Folles

Theatre mogul Bill Kenwright is reviving glamorous drag musical La Cage Aux Folles and bringing it to Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday to Saturday, May 16-20, as part of a UK tour.

Theatre star John Partridge will play the iconic role of Albin, star drag act Zaza at the infamous La Cage aux Folles nightclub in St Tropez.

Partridge's extensive theatre credits include the West End productions of A Chorus Line, Cats, Starlight Express and Chicago. He is also well known for playing Christian Clarke in BBC's EastEnders.

American actor and singer Adrian Zmed will play Georges, partner of Albin and owner of the nightclub. Zmed co-starred with William Shatner in the 70s hit TV show TJ Hooker and played Johnny Nogerelli in the movie Grease 2. This will be his first stage appearance in the UK although he is no stranger to Broadway.

Written by Harvey Fierstein and Jerry Herman, and based on the 1973 French play of the same name by Jean Poiret, La Cage Aux Folles follows the story of Georges and Albin as their way of life is threatened when Georges' son Jean-Michel announces his engagement to the daughter of a notorious right-wing politician. When a meeting of the parents forces the gay couple to cover up their lifestyle, will Albin be able to play the role of his life? This show-stopping score includes The Best of Times and the iconic I Am What I Am. La Cage Aux Folles is a multi-award winning musical.

For tickets www.birminghamhippodrome.com or call 0844 338 5000. The show also visits Wolverhampton Grand next month.

Count your lucky stars Dean's back

American singer-songwriter Dean Friedman returns to the UK for an extensive tour - including a gig at Bilston's Robin 2 venue on Wednesday (May 17).

He is promoting Words & Music, his double CD collection featuring 30 original songs from his last six studio albums.

New Jersey-born Friedman first marked his entry into pop consciousness in 1977 with US top 20 chart success of his infectious hit single, Ariel, a quirky pop song about a free spirited, pot-smoking, vegetarian Jewish girl who lived, as the lyric goes "...way on the other side of the Hudson".

Friedman scored again with the release of second album, Well, Well, Said the Rocking Chair' and its hit single, Lucky Stars, which reached no3 in the UK chart. This duet with Denise Marsa was followed by radio favourite Lydia.

Friedman's next single, McDonald's Girl was banned by the BBC for mentioning the fast food restaurant. The irrepressible pop song has been covered by a number of bands including top Canadian band, Barenaked Ladies. The song has become a viral YouTube video hit, and a staple of high school a capella groups, around the world,

Friedman's consummate songwriting and performing, have earned him a loyal international following, devoted to his sophisticated, funny and sometimes profound songs.

In more recent times he formed an alliance with British satirical rock band Half Man Half Biscuit, who on their 1987 album Back Again in the DHSS included a song entitled The Bastard Son of Dean Friedman. Biscuit lyricist Nigel Blackman and Friedman met at the 2003 Edinburgh Festival Fringe and seven years later the American singer joined the band on stage at the Robin.

Friedman, who lives in upstate New York with his wife and a very small dog, will be on stage at 8.30pm for the all-seated gig,

See www.therobin.co.uk or call 01902 401211.

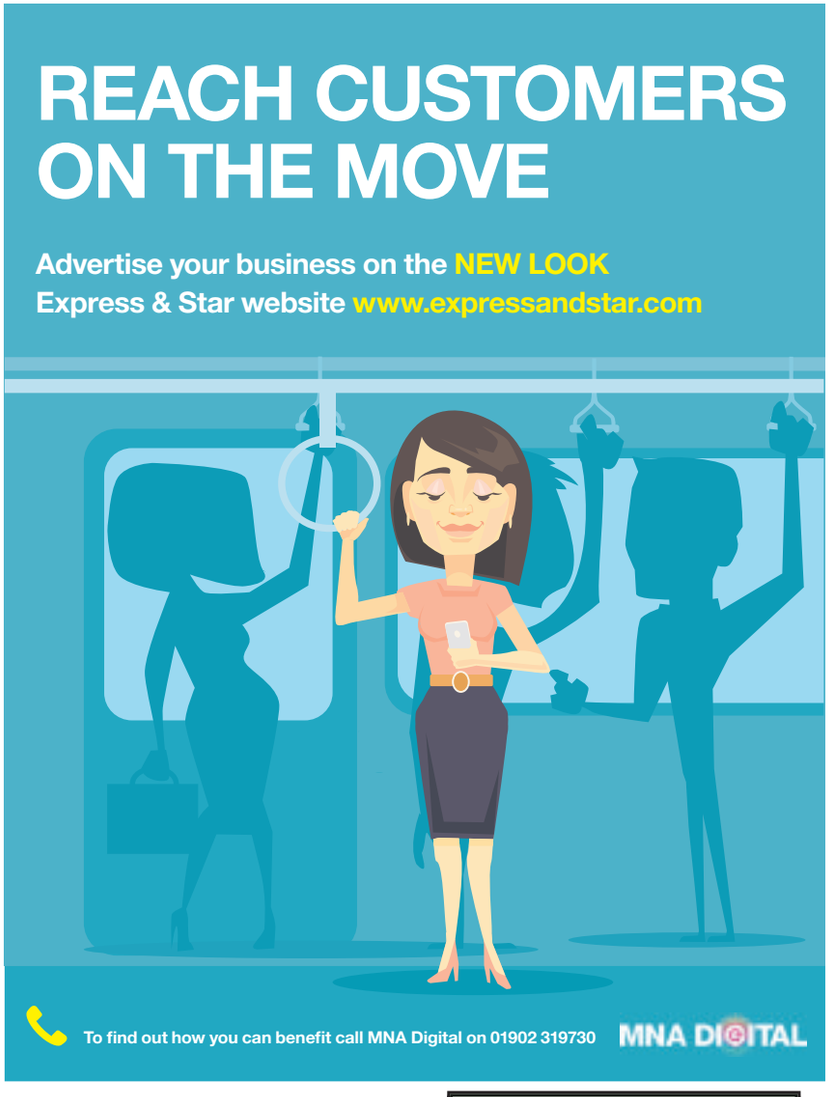
Funny business to help charities

Top comedians are on the way to help charities. On May 18 the fourth Hilarity Charity Gala at Wolverhampton Grand will raise money for the city's Central Youth Theatre. Daniel Kitson returns to host with Romesh Ranganathan, Josh Widdicombe, Tim Key and Suzi Ruffell on the bill.

On May 31 at Birmingham Rep, Joe Lycett (pictured) joins host Tiernan Douieb, Nish Kumar, Tez Ilyas, Allyson June Smith and Mrs Barbara Nice in the Stand Up For Refugees night.

Charlotte brings her Pop Dungeon party

Pick of the gigs include US rock band The Districts – who delivered a blistering set at 2015 Glastonbury – at the O2 Institute on May 20, the same night the revived Echobelly play the Digbeth venue's other room. Charlotte Church brings her Pop Dungeon party to the same venue tomorrow (Friday) with other acts coming up there including The Cribs, The Japanese House, Gavin DeGraw, veteran space rockers Hawkwind, Natalie Imbruglia, and Leftfield. The unclassifiable Hackney Colliery Band play Birmingham Rep on Saturday and pop sensation Ariana Grande plays the Genting Arena on May 18. Singer-songwriter Billy Rowan, AKA The Undercover Hippy, plays Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms on Saturday. Former chief Lemonhead Evan Dando is at the same venue on May 17.



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SATURDAY'S TV MAY 13

CHOICE

Graham Norton

Eurovision Song Contest 2017 (BBC1, 8pm)

Graham Norton returns to the commentary box to cover all the action from tonight's Grand Final, broadcast live from the International Exhibition Centre in Kiev, Ukraine. The event begins with the traditional artists' parade, and an introduction by Oleksandr Skichko, Volodymyr Ostapchuk and Timur Miroshnychenko, the Ukrainian TV stars serving as the masters of ceremonies tonight. The host nation, represented by alternative rock outfit O.Torvald, will join the 'Big Five' - France, Spain, Germany, Italy and the UK - in progressing directly through to the final, with the other 20 finallist spots being filled by the acts that made it through the semi-finals.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Mary Berry's Absolute Favourites. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Bargain Hunt. **1.45** Live Challenge Cup Rugby League. Castleford Tigers v St Helens (Kick-off 2.30pm). **4.30** Final Score. **5.20** Who Dares Wins.

6.05 BBC News.

6.15 Regional Programme.

6.25 Pointless Celebrities. Alexander Armstrong and Richard Osman invite another selection of famous faces to take part in the unorthodox general knowledge quiz. As always, the challengers are tasked with producing the least likely correct answers to a series of questions posed to members of the public. This time, all the contestants come from the world of comedy, as Andi Osho teams up with Holly Walsh, Kevin Eldon joins forces with Dave Johns, Barry Cryer works alongside Omid Djalili, and Stephen Frost throws his lot in with Helen Atkinson-Wood.

7.15 Doctor Who. The Tardis picks up a distress call from deep space, but when the Doctor, Bill and Nardole try to answer it, they find themselves trapped on board the space station Chasm Forge. On further investigation, they discover all but four people on board the facility have been murdered - but the dead are still walking. Now stranded in a future where oxygen is sold by the breath, and space-suits are valued more highly than their occupants, the time-travellers face a battle for survival against the darkest evil of all. Sci-fi adventure, starring Peter Capaldi, Pearl Mackie and Matt Lucas.

8.00 Eurovision Song Contest 2017. Graham Norton takes to the commentary box to cover all the action from tonight's Grand Final, broadcast live from the International Exhibition Centre in Kiev, Ukraine.

11.25 BBC News; Weather.; National Lottery Update.

11.45 Film: Fallen. (1998) A detective discovers a demon able to jump between unsuspecting human hosts is behind a series of murders. Supernatural thriller, starring Denzel Washington and John Goodman.

1.45 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.50** BBC News.

BBC2

6.40 Film: God's Little Acre. (1958) **8.25** Talking Pictures: Hollywood Actresses. (R) **9.10 Film:** The Glass Bottom Boat. (1966) **11.00** Monty Halls' Great Hebridean Escape. (R) **12.00** Great British Menu. (R) **12.30** Great British Menu. (R) **1.00** Great British Menu. (R) **1.30** Escape to the Country. (R) **2.15** Flog It! **3.00** Trust Me, I'm A Vet. (R) **4.00** Gardeners' World. (R) **5.00** Live Women's FA Cup Final. Birmingham City Ladies v Manchester City Women (Kick-off 5.15pm).

7.30 Yorkshire Wolds Way with Paul Rose. The first of two programmes in which adventurer Paul Rose explores the 79 miles of the Yorkshire Wolds Way, one of Britain's least well-known national walking trails. The trail starts at the Humber Estuary and ends at the North Yorkshire seaside resort of Filey. On the way, Paul takes in the views from the top of the Humber Bridge, learns to ride a penny farthing and searches out the spots made internationally famous by the artist David Hockney.

8.00 Dad's Army. The platoon rescues the verger from being carried away by a barrage balloon and the men take it off to the woods to secure it to a tree. Unfortunately they let go of the ropes too early and it floats off – taking Captain Mainwaring with it. Classic comedy first broadcast in 1969, starring Arthur Lowe, John Laurie, John Le Mesurier and Clive Dunn. (R)

8.30 Film: Woman in Gold. (2015) Premiere. An elderly Austrian woman who fled the country during the Second World War returns to her home country in search of justice. Several art treasures belonging to her family were seized by the Nazis when she escaped, including a famous painting by Klimt, and she enlists the aid of an American lawyer in reclaiming them from the current government. Fact-based drama, starring Helen Mirren, Ryan Reynolds and Daniel Bruhl.

10.10 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights from the Premier League, including Stoke City v Arsenal at the Bet365 Stadium and Manchester City v Leicester City at the Emirates Stadium.

11.25 Versailles; (R) Inside Versailles.

12.25 Film: Therese Desqueyroux. (2012) **2.10** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.25** Sooty. (R) **6.35** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Marvel Avengers Assemble. (R) **7.30** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.55** NinjaGo: Masters of Spinjitzu. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** The Home Game. (R) **10.20** Judge Rinder. (R) **11.20** Tipping Point. (R) **12.20** ITV News; Weather. **12.30** Bigheads. (R) **1.30 Film:** The Man in the Iron Mask. (1998) Adventure, starring Leonardo DiCaprio. **4.00** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. (R) **4.30** Catchphrase. (R) **5.15** Britain's Got More Talent. (R)

6.15 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.25 ITV News; Weather.

6.45 Take Me Out.

8.00 Britain's Got Talent. Ant and Dec host as the fifth round of auditions gets under way, and more hopeful stars take to the stage in a bid to impress judges Simon Cowell, Alesha Dixon, Amanda Holden and David Walliams. So far this year, the panel has been entertained by the likes of acrobatic dancers, a junior magician inspired by Harry Potter, and a comedy dance duo who roped Ant and Dec into their routine. Simon Cowell and Alesha Dixon have already hit their Golden Buzzers to send singer Sarah Ikumu and young all-girl dance troupe Just Us through to the live shows, and Amanda Holden threw her support behind comedian Daliso Chaponda. David Walliams and Ant and Dec are yet to cast their votes, but have offered a few teasers about what to expect from their chosen performers.

9.15 The Keith and Paddy Picture Show. Keith Lemon and Paddy McGuinness enlist the aid of Will Mellor, Robbie Williams, Sarah Parish, Emma Willis and Chris Kamara and others as they remake the 1984 classic Ghostbusters.

9.45 Film: The Mask. (1994) A timid bank clerk finds an ancient mask that gives whoever wears it superhuman powers and unbridled self-confidence. Comic-book comedy, starring Jim Carrey.

10.45 ITV News; Weather.

11.00 Film: The Mask. (1994) Concluded.

12.00 Jackpot247. **3.00** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 Motor Sport: Volkswagen Racing Cup. **6.45** Motor Sport: British Rally Championship. **7.10** The King of Queens. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **9.55** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.25** The Simpsons. (R) **10.55** The Simpsons. (R) **11.25** The Simpsons. (R) **11.55** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **12.50** Come Dine with Me. **1.25** Come Dine with Me. **1.55** Come Dine with Me. **2.25** Come Dine with Me. **2.55** A Place in the Sun: Summer Sun. (R) **3.55** Big House, Little House. **5.00** Channel 4 News. **5.30** Formula 1: Spanish Grand Prix Qualifying Highlights.

7.00 The Restoration Man. George Clarke returns to Harrogate, North Yorkshire, to catch up with ambitious property developers Mark Hinchliffe and Laura Ruston. Three years ago, Mark and Laura began the process of converting a Sunday school building, which they would then sell to raise funds to begin work on the church next door. However, as costs began to spiral out of control, it became clear a compromise might need to be made between practicality and Mark's high standards.

8.00 Walks with My Dog. New series. Famous people explore the British outdoors while taking their four-legged friends for a stroll, beginning with Robert Lindsay, Angela Griffin and Phil Spencer. Previously seen on More4.

9.00 Film: 12 Years a Slave. (2013) A free black man living in pre-Civil War New York is abducted and sold into slavery. He spends the next 12 years struggling to survive and maintain his dignity in the face of brutal treatment, while clinging to a desperate hope that he can return to his family. Oscar-winning historical drama based on Solomon Northup's autobiographical book, starring Chiwetel Ejiofor, Michael Fassbender, Benedict Cumberbatch and Brad Pitt.

11.35 Film: AVP: Alien vs Predator. (2004) Scientists are caught up in a battle between two races of deadly extraterrestrial creatures in a mysterious pyramid. Sci-fi thriller, starring Sanaa Lathan and Lance Henriksen.

1.20 Hollyoaks. (R) **3.30** Location, Location, Location. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.55** The Fairly OddParents. (R) **10.30** Access. (R) **10.35** The Gadget Show. (R) **11.30** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.30** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.30** Police Interceptors. (R) **2.30** FIA Formula E Live: Monaco. The fifth round of the season. **4.15** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **5.15** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R)

6.10 5 News Weekend.

6.15 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. In south London, a father-and-son team face death threats from a debtor's father, while in east London, a tenant claims to have had no prior warning that he is being evicted. (R)

7.05 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Officers Gary and Cona chase up nearly £50,000 in unpaid rent, and Del and Max bid to collect more than £10,000 from a beauty salon for a disgruntled former employee.

8.00 NCIS. Tony finds himself in a difficult position when his identity is stolen. Worse yet, multiple fraudsters make use of his status as a special agent to blackmail US senators, and as the chain of events begins to spiral out of control, it is left to the real Dinozzo to bring the perpetrators to justice. Naval crime drama, starring Michael Weatherly.

9.00 NCIS. Gibbs teams up with his old friend Senior FBI Agent TC Fornell to track down two British prisoners who escaped to the US via a shipping container.

9.55 NCIS: Los Angeles. Part two of two. The teams fly to Los Angeles from Hawaii in pursuit of Jarrod Taylor, who claims he is being paid by an immunologist. Crossover episode with Hawaii Five-0.

10.50 Moors Murders: Britain's Worst Crime. An insight into the crimes of Myra Hindley and Ian Brady, establishing the chronology of their acts and explaining why it took so long for the pair to be brought to justice. (R)

11.45 Criminals: Caught on Camera. Journalist Nick Wallis joins police forces around the nation to discover how CCTV and technological advances are helping to bring criminals to justice. (R)

12.15 SuperCasino. **3.10** Top 20 Funniest. **4.00** Criminals: Caught on Camera. (R) **4.50** House Doctor. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Nature's Great Events **8.00** Masters of the Pacific Coast: The Tribes of The American Northwest **9.00** Hinterland **10.25** Top of the Pops: 1983 **11.35** The Kate Bush Story: Running Up That Hill **12.35** Kate Bush at the BBC **1.35** Singer-Songwriters at the BBC **2.35** The Kate Bush Story: Running Up That Hill **3.40** Close

ITV2

11.00 Britain's Got Talent **12.15** Britain's Got More Talent **1.15** Take Me Out **2.30** Take Me Out – The Gossip **3.30** You've Been Framed! Gold **4.30 Film:** The Smurfs (2011) **5.30** FYI Daily **5.35 Film:** The Smurfs (2011) **6.35 Film:** Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **7.35** FYI Daily **7.40 Film:** Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **8.20** Scorpion **9.15** Britain's Got More Talent **10.20** Celebrity Juice **11.20** Family Guy **12.45 Film:** American Pie (1999) **1.45** FYI Daily **1.50 Film:** American Pie (1999) **2.35** The Hot Desk: Nick Jonas **2.45** Teleshopping

ITV3

12.05 Film: Carry On at Your Convenience (1971) **1.10** FYI Daily **1.15 Film:** Carry On at Your Convenience (1971) **2.00** Lewis **5.55** Rosemary & Thyme **7.00** Midsomer Murders **9.00** Foyle's War **11.00** Law & Order: UK **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

11.00 The Classic Car Show **12.00** British Touring Car Championship Highlights **1.30** ITV Racing Live from Ascot. **4.30 Film:** The Cimarron Kid (1952) **5.30** FYI Daily **5.35 Film:** The Cimarron Kid (1952) **6.20** Football's Greatest: Johan Cruyff **6.35** Storage Wars **7.05** The Sweeney **8.05** Better Late Than Never **9.00 Film:** Conan the Destroyer (1984) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05 Film:** Conan the Destroyer (1984) **11.10 Film:** Universal Soldier: Day of Reckoning (2012) **12.10** FYI Daily **12.15 Film:** Universal Soldier: Day of Reckoning (2012) **1.25** Ironside **2.20** Tommy Cooper **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen

E4

12.30 The Goldbergs **3.30 Film:** The Spy Next Door (2010) **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Van Helsing (2004) **11.40** Gogglebox **1.50** Rude Tube **2.45** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **3.30** Blackish **3.50** New Girl **4.35** Charmed

Film4

11.00 A Thousand Words (2012) **1.00** Field of Dreams (1989) **3.05** Gulliver's Travels (2010) **4.40** The Three Musketeers (1973) **6.50** I, Robot (2004) **9.00** Salt (2010) **11.00** The Haunting (1999) **1.10** Fright Night (1985)

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SUNDAY'S TV MAY 14

CHOICE

Sue Perkins

British Academy Television Awards 2017 (BBC1, 8pm)
Sue Perkins hosts the awards ceremony from London's Royal Festival Hall. The Crown, Planet Earth II, The Last Leg, People Just Do Nothing, The Real Marigold Hotel and Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway are among the shows in the running, while stars nominated for awards include Benedict Cumberbatch, Olivia Colman, Clare Foy, Adeel Akhtar, Steve Coogan, Nikki Amuka-Bird, Sarah Lancashire and Tom Hollander.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.40** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.15** Money for Nothing. (R) **3.00** Flog It! (R) **4.00** Points of View. **4.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.15** Songs of Praise. **5.50** Pointless Celebrities. (R)

6.35 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 Countryfile. Matt Baker reports on a plan to preserve the Suffolk Broads and its wildlife with a vast land purchase, while Ellie Harrison visits a community-run farm where all waste is re-used. John Craven celebrates National Mills Weekend at Bardwell, Tom Heap investigates egg thieves who are endangering rare birds, and Adam Henson and Charlotte Smith meet a young farmer nominated for special recognition by viewers.

8.00 British Academy Television Awards 2017. Sue Perkins hosts the awards ceremony from London's Royal Festival Hall. Shows in the running include The Crown, Planet Earth II, The Last Leg and People Just Do Nothing.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman is joined by Jermaine Jenas to review the latest Premier League action, featuring Tottenham Hotspur v Manchester United at White Hart Lane, Crystal Palace v Hull City at Selhurst Park and West Ham United v Liverpool at the Olympic Stadium. Plus, a look back at the rest of the weekend's fixtures.

11.45 Murder in Successville. DI Sleet and sidekick Reggie Yates go on a stag night that turns deadly when undercover detective Noel Edmonds is found dead in a compromising position.

12.15 Film: Forget Me Not. (2011) A musician comes to the aid of a barmaid being accosted by a drunk. Together they go on a journey around London and begin to fall in love, but as the night draws to a close, a secret threatens to bring their fledgling relationship to an end before it has begun. Romantic drama, with Tobias Menzies and Genevieve O'Reilly. **1.45** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.50** BBC News.

BBC2

6.30 The Instant Gardener. (R) **7.15** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.15** The Beechgrove Garden. **8.45** Countryfile. (R) **9.45** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.15** Great British Menu. (R) **11.45** Great British Menu. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Triathlon World Series: Yokohama Highlights. **2.30** Live Challenge Cup Rugby League. Warrington Wolves v Widnes Vikings (Kick-off 3.00pm). **5.00** Athletics: Diamond League Shanghai Highlights.

6.00 Inside the Factory: How Our Favourite Foods Are Made. Gregg Wallace and Cherry Healey find out about the production of three household staples, beginning with bread. Gregg visits one of Britain's largest bakeries, which makes up to one and a half millions loaves each week, where he sees a machine that can bag a loaf in mid-air. Cherry is at a mill to discover the secret of making the perfect flour and historian Ruth Goodman shows the hidden killers that used to lurk within bread. (R)

7.00 Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond the Lobby. Giles Coren and Monica Galetti join the staff working in some of the most unusual hotels around the world, learning the tricks of the trade. (R)

8.00 Mexico: Earth's Festival of Life. Exploring the forests of the Yucatan Peninsula, which contain the ruins of the Mayan civilisation and a wide range of wildlife, including jaguars, monkeys and tropical birds. The region also holds a secret that is the key to how Mexico's people and animals are able to survive during the country's dry season.

9.00 Dara and Ed's Road to Mandalay. Dara O Briain and Ed Byrne reach Thailand, where they find out about locals' reaction to the tourist explosion in Bangkok, visit an elephant sanctuary and enjoy a massage.

10.00 Film: Half of a Yellow Sun. (2013) Two sisters pursue separate lives in newly-liberated Nigeria, only to get caught up in the civil war. Drama, starring Thandie Newton, Anika Noni Rose and Chiwetel Ejiofor.

11.45 Film: Memento. (2000) Christopher Nolan's thriller, with Guy Pearce and Carrie-Anne Moss.

1.45 Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **2.45** Holby City. (R) **3.45** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.25** Sooty. (R) **6.35** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Marvel Avengers Assemble. (R) **7.30** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.55** NinjaGo: Masters of Spinjitzu. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Countrywise. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **11.00** Judge Rinder. (R) **11.55** ITV News; Weather. **12.10** Tipping Point. (R) **1.10** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **2.05** The Chase. (R) **3.05** Britain's Got Talent. (R) **4.20 Film:** Live and Let Die. (1973) James Bond spy adventure, starring Roger Moore.

6.35 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.45 ITV News; Weather.

7.00 Bigheads. Jason Manford hosts the comedy game show in which contestants compete in a series of bizarre physical challenges while wearing giant model heads of Simon Cowell, Vladimir Putin, Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall. They must dodge past giant bouncers to get into a nightclub, fight over microphones to record a single, and get away before the paparazzi see them. With commentary from Jenny Powell and Kriss Akabusi.

8.00 The Durrells. Larry moves back into the family's villa having come down with mumps, which Louisa hopes will give Aunt Hermione an incentive to cancel her planned visit. Her hopes prove in vain when her overbearing relative turns up, accompanied by medium Mrs Haddock (Una Stubbs), who claims to be able to contact Louisa's husband. She tells Louisa that he is terribly unhappy about her numerous male admirers, fuelling her doubts over her relationship with Hugh, and proposes a seance on a stormy night to set his troubled spirit at rest.

9.00 Grantchester. A factory worker dies in what appears to be a drunken accident, but Geordie suspects foul play. However, secret forces are determined to shut down his investigation.

10.00 ITV News; Weather.

10.20 Peston on Sunday. (R)

11.20 Lethal Weapon. (R)

12.10 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 The King of Queens. (R) **6.40** The King of Queens. (R) **7.05** The King of Queens. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Eat the Week. **1.30 Film:** Dr Dolittle. (1998) Comedy, starring Eddie Murphy. **3.10** Location, Location, Location. (R) **4.15** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **5.15** Escape to Costa Rica.

6.15 Channel 4 News.

6.45 Formula 1: Spanish Grand Prix Highlights. Steve Jones presents action from the fifth round of the season at the Circuit de Catalunya in Barcelona, where Max Verstappen was the surprise winner last season. That was the first F1 win for the Dutchman, who became the youngest driver to ever win a Formula One Grand Prix at just 18 years and 228 days, replacing the record previously set by Sebastian Vettel.

9.00 The Island with Bear Grylls. The castaways enter their final days on the island, and Karen's health is deteriorating dangerously, as she suffers low blood sugar and diarrhoea. Ben and Jager try to catch some fish or hunt an elusive turkey, while Aran and Jacqui stumble across a caiman crocodile – which while dangerous, may also be an urgently needed source of food.

10.00 Surviving The Island with Bear Grylls. The castaways look back on the past five weeks on the island, and Bear reveals which of the two groups did the best job of surviving. Last in the series.

11.00 Film: Prisoners. (2013) The distraught father of a missing child kidnaps a man he believes is responsible for her disappearance. Thriller, starring Hugh Jackman.

1.50 Millionaires' Mansions: Designing Britain's Most Exclusive Homes. Luxury design, including a custom-fitted bed company, a man who creates unique fragrances for clients' homes and Sol Campbell's wife Fiona, a leading light in the furniture world. (R) **2.45** Location, Location, Location. Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer help couples in Hertfordshire and north London. (R) **3.40** Building the Dream. A couple build a home in the style of a Georgian rectory. **4.35** KOTV Boxing Weekly. Katie Taylor v Milena Koleva. **5.05** Gillette World Sport. With Kim Jung-Hwan, Johnny Durand and Antoine Griezmann.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Milkshake! Monkey. **6.05** Mr Men. (R) **6.15** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.20** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.25** Wissper. (R) **6.35** Paw Patrol. (R) **6.45** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.00** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.10** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.15** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.20** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.35** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **7.55** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.15** Wissper. (R) **8.25** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.40** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.05** Little Princess. (R) **9.20** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.25** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.30** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.40** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.55** The Fairly OddParents. (R) **10.30** Access. (R) **10.40** Criminals: Caught on Camera. (R) **11.10 Film:** Michael. (1996) Fantasy comedy, starring John Travolta. **1.10** On Benefits: Breadline Brits. (R) **2.10** On Benefits: The Compensation King. (R) **3.10** On Benefits: Famous & Claiming. (R) **4.10** On Benefits: Spend it Like Beckham. (R) **5.10** Britain's Best Loved Double Acts. (R)

8.00 Toddlers Make You Laugh Out Loud. Compilation of internet videos featuring children doing bizarre and humorous things. Youngsters featured include sassy six-year-old Johanna, whose extraordinary performance of Aretha Franklin's Respect at her school recital in 2015 has been viewed more than 50 million times. Plus, three-year-old April, who blames a nail-polish disaster on her doll. Narrated by Iain Lee. (R)

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 When Game Shows Go Horribly Wrong. Dale Winton narrates a compilation of disastrous game show moments. Featuring contestants on The Million Pound Drop failing to pay attention to a question with a fortune at stake, the least successful player to appear on The Chase, the woman who broke her leg on The Krypton Factor and still finished third and the Princess Diana-themed episode of Channel 5 quiz show 100%.

12.05 The Best of Bad TV: When Comedy Shows Go Wrong. More misjudged small-screen comedy, including the 1990 sitcom Heil Honey, I'm Home. (R) **1.00** SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **3.10** Top 20 Funniest. A man's new TV slips out of his hands. (R) **4.00** Streets of Rage: Caught on Camera. (R) **4.50** House Doctor. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.40** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 The Birth of British Music **8.00** The Secret Life of the Motorway **9.00** OJ: Made in America **10.30** Storyville: Circus Elephant Rampage **11.25** Timeshift: How Britain Won the Space Race – The Story of Bernard Lovell and Jodrell Bank **12.25** Horizon: The Creative Brain – How Insight Works **1.25** Nature's Great Events **2.25** Michael Palin's Quest for Artemisia **3.25** Close

ITV2
12.35 Film: The Smurfs (2011) **1.35** FYI Daily **1.40 Film:** The Smurfs (2011) **2.40 Film:** A Cinderella Story (2004) **3.40** FYI Daily **3.45 Film:** A Cinderella Story (2004) **4.35** Britain's Got Talent **5.50** Britain's Got More Talent **6.50 Film:** Step Up (2006) **7.50** FYI Daily **7.55 Film:** Step Up (2006) **9.00** Take Me Out – The Gossip **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.25** The Cleveland Show **1.20** The Vampire Diaries **2.10** The Hot Desk: Zara Larsson **2.20** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
12.05 Film: Columbo: Double Shock (1973) **1.40** A Touch of Frost **3.55** Foyle's War **5.55** Midsomer Murders **8.00** Royal Stories **9.00** The Queen's Garden **10.00** Law & Order: UK **12.05** Wire in the Blood **2.10** Agatha Christie's Marple **3.50** May the Best House Win **5.30** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4
1.40 Film: The Horse Soldiers (1959) **2.40** FYI Daily **2.45 Film:** The Horse Soldiers (1959) **4.05 Film:** Apache (1954) **5.10** FYI Daily **5.15 Film:** Apache (1954) **5.55** River Monsters **7.00** Fishing Impossible **8.00** The Chase: Celebrity Special **9.00** Car Crash Global **10.05 Film:** Assault on Precinct 13 (2005) **11.10** FYI Daily **11.15 Film:** Assault on Precinct 13 (2005) **12.20** River Monsters **2.20** Tommy Cooper **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
1.30 Baby Daddy **2.00** Kevin Can Wait **2.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **3.00** New Girl **3.30 Film:** Thunderbirds (2004) **5.20** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **5.35** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** Tattoo Fixers **12.05** Rude Tube **1.05** E4's Tattoo Artist of the Year: The Finale **2.10** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD

Film4
1.00 Spy Kids 4: All the Time in the World (2011) **2.45** Carry On Teacher (1959) **4.30** St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold (2009) **6.35** Star Trek (2009) **9.00** Unknown (2011) **11.15** Shutter Island (2010) **1.55** Eyes Without a Face (1960) **3.50** Close

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PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Rise of the Krays, Channel 5, 10pm
Biopic of the gangster brothers, exploring their formative years. Twins Ronnie and Reggie begin their criminal career as 18-year-old amateur boxers, and rapidly rise to become the most feared gang leaders in the London underworld, their brutal excesses observed by a close friend. Starring Kevin Leslie, Simon Cotton and Nicola Stapleton. (2015)

TUESDAY
Hannibal, Channel 5, 11.05pm
Fugitive serial killer Dr Hannibal Lecter has gone into hiding as an academic in Italy, but a disfigured victim is determined to find him and inflict a gruesome revenge. FBI agent Clarice Starling is once again drawn into the doctor's deadly orbit as she finds herself being used as bait for the avenger's trap. Ridley Scott's thriller sequel, starring Anthony Hopkins, Julianne Moore, Gary Oldman and Ray Liotta. (2001)

Hannibal, Tuesday, Channel 5, 11.05pm

WEDNESDAY
The Debt, Channel 4, 1.25am
Three Mossad agents are declared heroes in 1965 for apparently killing a notorious Nazi war criminal. Nearly 30 years later, they receive shocking news, as the secrets that were buried during the assignment come back to haunt them. Thriller, starring Helen Mirren. Tom Wilkinson, Ciaran Hinds, Jessica Chastain, Marton Csokas and Sam Worthington. (2010)

THURSDAY
Social Nightmare, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A talented student-to-be is targeted by a hacker who begins posting inappropriate content on her social network accounts. Mystery thriller, starring Kirsten Prout. Edited for daytime broadcast. (2013)

FRIDAY
The Mystery Cruise, Channel 5, 3.15pm
During a three-day murder-mystery game on board a cruise ship to promote the release of her bestselling mother's latest novel, a private investigator and her best friend suspect that a real killer may be on the loose. Thriller, starring Gail O'Grady, Michelle Harrison and Venus Terzo. (2013)

Walking into a nightmare that looks like it will never end

In 2010, the BBC drama Five Daughters won praise for its sensitive look at the victims of the Ipswich serial murders and the impact the crimes had on their families.

Now the producers and director are reuniting for Three Girls, a three-part series which is broadcast over consecutive nights and draws on the true stories of the victims of sexual abuse in Rochdale.

The case shocked Britain and led to nine men being convicted and sentenced, but the drama focuses on the children who were groomed during the period 2008 to 2012.

Writer Nicola Taylor, whose previous credits include the one-off Sheridan Smith drama The C Word, believes that despite the publicity the case received, the girls' stories were not always heard. She says: "Whatever I thought I knew about what had happened in Rochdale, I knew nothing until I met the girls and their families.

"Listening to them was the beginning of understanding – not just of the terrible suffering they experienced, but of the courage it took to persist and persist over years, in telling authorities who didn't want to know, and ultimately participate in the court proceedings that brought justice."

The series has been made with the full cooperation of the victims and their families, and director Philippa Lowthorpe pays tribute to their bravery. She says: "It's both a privilege and a responsibility to be allowed to tell this powerful, true story. I have huge respect for the girls and their families for sharing their experiences with us. It's through their courage in speaking out that we can try to understand the devastating effects of grooming.

"During the research, not only was it incredibly moving hearing the stories of the girls and their families, but also the experiences of those who fought to protect the girls and bring the perpetrators to justice."

In Three Girls, Maxine Peake and Lesley Sharp will play two women who were instrumental in getting the girls' voices heard. The impressive supporting cast also includes Paul Kaye, Lisa Riley and Jill Halfpenny as parents of the girls, alongside Ace Bhatti as Nazir Afzal, former Chief Crown Prosecutor for the North West. The real Afzal believes it's a story that needs to be told, saying: "The Rochdale case was both ground-breaking and heart-breaking.

"It forced every agency to look at their ways of working afresh and the creation of the first guidance for prosecutors, police, and local authorities. The case caused seismic and long-overdue change in the way trials involving vulnerable victims were dealt with. At last, victims had a voice."

However, that still seems a long way off in the first episode, which introduces us to Holly (Molly Windsor), who is new to Rochdale and trying to fit in. Instead, she finds herself drawn into a world she can't escape, despite her pleas for help.

But her story sounds all too familiar to sexual health worker Sara (Peake), who has been recording and reporting similar stories of child abuse for years.

Maxine Peake stars in Three Girls, Tuesday, BBC1, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Ivanka Trump: America's Real First Lady?
Channel 4, 9pm
Donald Trump's presidency has so far been dramatic, unpredictable and mired in controversy. But amid the mayhem, there is one woman who appears to hold more influence over him than his wife Melania or his special advisors – his 35-year-old daughter Ivanka. Matt Frei travels to the United States to find out more about the model-turned-businesswoman, exploring where she fits into her father's administration, how she aligns her women's rights campaigns with the President's more controversial views, and whether she dreams of sitting in the Oval Office herself one day.

TUESDAY
First Dates
Channel 4, 10pm
The latest episode of the often touching series introduces us to violinist Maggie, who's 63 and has played in orchestras all around the world. She's looking for a man who shares her passion for the finer things in life, but can retired police officer and recent divorcee Alistair meet her exacting standards? Meanwhile, IT consultant Patrick is about to go on his first date in seven years with 29-year-old marketing student Angharad. They're both self-proclaimed misfits, but will they find they fit together? We also meet 19-year-old bricklayer Molly, who works with men all day long but has yet to find her perfect man. Warehouse worker Hussein is usually confident with the ladies, but dealing with someone who considers herself one of the lads could catch him off guard.

WEDNESDAY
Trust Me, I'm A Vet
BBC2, 8pm
In the final episode, Judy Puddifoot investigates the warning signs dogs give out before becoming aggressive, and Steve Leonard looks into the latest research that suggests feeding your cat only fish-based pet foods over the long term could lead to health problems. Elsewhere, Alice Rhodes discovers that one in five cats in the UK lives in a state of long-term anxiety because they share a house with another cat, and she runs a series of unique experiments to test different stress-reducing methods. Last in the series.

THURSDAY
Kat and Alfie: Redwater
BBC1, 8pm
EastEnders fans will remember that during Kat Moon's (nee Slater) last visit to Walford, she made a discovery that was shocking even by soap standards. It turned out that when she gave birth to her daughter Zoe as a teenager, she passed out and didn't realise that she also delivered a baby boy, who was given up for adoption without her knowledge. Now this six-part spin-off follows Kat (Jessie Wallace) and Alfie (Shane Richie) as they search for her son, a hunt that takes them to the Irish town of Redwater. Alfie tries to make Kat promise that she will keep a low-profile, but that has never been his wife's style, especially when she meets Andrew (Peter Campion) and starts to suspect that he could be her long-lost child.

Kat and Alfie: Redwater, Thursday, BBC1, 8pm

FRIDAY
River Monsters
ITV, 8pm
New series. Extreme angler Jeremy Wade turns his attention from freshwater mysteries to the world's oceans, going in search of the real creature behind the enduring sea serpent legend. Starting in his own backyard, Jeremy fishes in the English Channel on the trail of a violent attack. His investigation leads him to Thailand where the mythology of the sea serpent reveals a vital clue.

Count Arthur Strong
BBC1, 8.30pm
Thanks to shows like The X Factor, The Voice and Britain's Got Talent, it's more likely for performers to become famous overnight rather than working their way to the top. However, as with many journeys in life, sometimes taking the longer route can be much more satisfying. Comedian Steve Delaney is now in his early 60s, and in the last decade or so he has finally found a fanbase and acclaim thanks to this award-winning sitcom. Tonight the new series begins as the eternally optimistic ex-variety star is enlisted to rid a haunted house of its demonic occupants.

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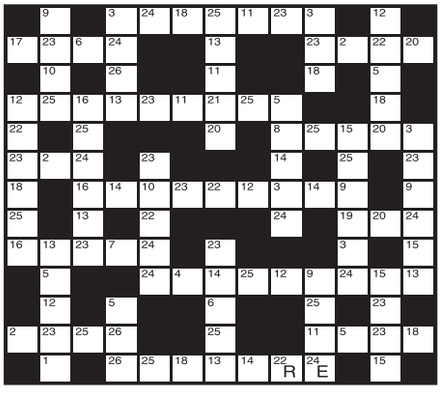
BRAIN GYM

No.429

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



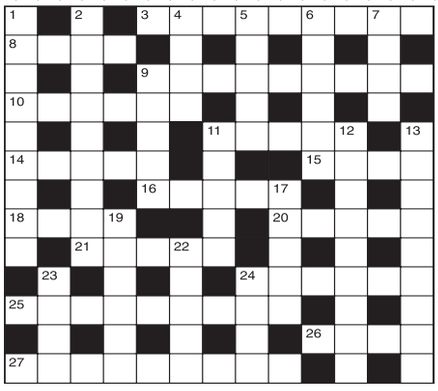
1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22 R
10	23
11	24 E
12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Z	U	V	W	O	N	P	S	A	C	F	X	G
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
M	D	T	R	Q	B	Y	K	E	I	L	H	J

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

3. Make a speech about where people live? (9)
8. The destination of this trip is an ancient city (4)
9. The inference is that it is to be taken away (9)
10. Set of games that can be stretched (6)
11. The length of the beat? (5)
14. Showing slackness, mislay a ring inside (5)
15. Always having some of the very best (4)
16. The correct side? (5)
18. They have a habit of community membership (4)
20. Draws lines for players to keep within (5)
21. But bad –do" earlier causes uncertain opinion (5)
24. This bird is about right in the morning (6)
25. Didn't pay up - a shortcoming indeed (9)
26. It's hard work producing tip-top lubrication (4)
27. To go back to her would be sensible but for this (9)

Down

1. Sensational beginning includes learner (9)
2. Mute discovered how to astonish (9)
4. Sounds like an expensive animal (4)
5. The way for 8 out East (5)
6. Write crucial piece having taken seat with anger (6)
7. Cupid got up irritable (4)
9. Put off being freed, in a way (5)
11. Could be a show of strength (5)
12. Development: coup d'etat ousts right (9)
13. By and by bearing gifts? (9)
17. Rated surface of tyre (5)
19. Thus given ornamental fabric to comfort (6)
22. Feel depressed underneath (5)
23. Abandoned one side (4)
24. What a muddle where the troops eat! (4)

Quick Clues:

Across

3. Watcher (9)
8. Standard (4)
9. Equipped (9)
10. Unimpaired (6)
11. Punitive (5)
14. Recess (5)
15. Cripple (4)
16. Hinder (5)
18 God of Thunder (4)
20. Keen (5)
21. Get to (5)
24. Pour from one vessel to another (6)
25. Two-sided (9)
26. Stigma (4)
27. Mildness (9)

Down

1. Affront (9)
2. Guardian (9)
4. Covenant (4)
5. Shut (5)
6. Starry (6)
7. Finished (4)
9. Stood in (5)
11. Repair (5)
12. Ludicrous (9)
13. Land (9)
17. Drive back (5)
19. Stay (6)
22. Purify (5)
23. Poster (4)
24. Platform (4)

Sudoku

		1			7		9	
4		9		1				
	5		4				2	6
5	1		9		8		6	4
				7				
	8		5		2		3	1
3	2						4	
		4		6	9			8
	9		8			3		

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

5	7	8	3	2	9	1	6	4
2	9	4	8	6	1	3	7	5
6	3	1	7	4	5	8	9	2
4	1	9	2	8	6	7	5	3
3	6	2	1	5	7	4	8	9
8	5	7	4	9	3	2	1	6
1	2	6	9	7	4	5	3	8
9	8	3	5	1	2	6	4	7
7	4	5	6	3	8	9	2	1

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Rare; 3 Threaded; 8 Veto; 9 Sing-sing; 11 Serve at table; 13 Oyster; 14 Tickle; 17 Estate agents; 20 Aptitude; 21 Aria; 22 Departed; 23 Edge.
Down: 1 Revision; 2 Returns; 4 Hoists; 5 Engravings; 6 Drill; 7 Digs; 10 Benefactor; 12 Seascape; 15 Kindred; 16 Needle; 18 Sit up; 19 Band.
QUICK - Across: 1 Slim; 3 Cauldron; 8 Axle; 9 Probable; 11 Overpowering; 13 Resist; 14 Stable; 17 Demonstrated; 20 Isolated; 21 Zero; 22 Prevents; 23 Snug. Down: 1 Seaboard; 2 Illness; 4 Arrows; 5 Laboratory; 6 Robin; 7 Need; 10 Episcopate; 12 Headlong; 15 Between; 16 Assent; 18 Evoke; 19 Limp.

Quiz

1. What is neutralised by degaussing?
2. Which mime artist created the clown-harlequin Bip?
3. On which island is Les Hanois Lighthouse?
4. What is the common name for Marburg disease?
5. What do we call a fibrous skeleton of the fruit of Luffa cylindrica?
6. Which religious group was established by Mary Baker Eddy in 1879?
7. In which country was the Rosetta Stone discovered in 1799?
8. Who is singer Tara Newley's mother?
9. What is petrol called in America?
10. Who wrote the tragedy Medea?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 General Tom Thumb; 2 Hinduism; 3 Brighton; 4 Lionel Bart; 5 Starfish; 6 Tripoli; 7 A rodent; 8 Two; 9 Ann Miller; 10 Cambridgeshire.

Niner: DEFLATION

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

739163	gives a bird,
9446789	gives a second bird,
215587	gives a young bird.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Pigot – so close to perfection

I can't pretend that I am a stranger to the Pigot Arms in Pattingham. Having lived in the South Staffordshire village for more than three decades I must confess I have frequented the pub on many occasions over the years.

In that time I have seen many changes, both of staff and the look of the pub – mostly inside not out.

In the past it was always a bit hit and miss as far as the food was concerned – you never quite knew whether you would leave extolling its virtues or very disappointed. But not now, when the latest management took over a few years ago the food and the whole atmosphere changed for the better.

You can tell by looking in the windows, where there were empty tables now the place is full of diners and it caters a lot for larger parties. Not only people like me who can take a five-minute walk to get there.

Obviously the locals are there but many diners come from further afield – and there is a huge car park and an outside area for children to run around. The word has obviously spread. Word of mouth is so important and if people have a good meal and enjoy the decor and atmosphere they tell their friends.

We went recently to a taster night for the new menu, an excellent idea when you can try just snippets of what is going to be on offer. Obviously you can't try everything on the menu but it is, as it says, a little taste of the quality of the food and the range of choices.

Our daughter was visiting from Warwickshire with her fiancé and as she grew up in the village she is always keen to go to the Pigot, a regular haunt when she was growing up. We popped down the four of us recently, my husband and I and Amy with her fiancé Duncan, mainly to discuss her forthcoming wedding but also just to relax and appreciate somebody else cooking.

Attractive entrance to the Pigot Arms in Pattingham

Sarah Lathwood and team member Sara Hadley

Amy is herself a very competent cook and a good food critic so I relied on her opinion. Me, I just love food. We all tucked into starters but decided not to go for one of the sharers. Probably a good idea as my future son-in-law loves food as much as I do and probably would have had the lion's share!

So with the bottle of Prosecco and Merlot well under way we opted for four different starters. Always nice to try a bit of each, I opted for the crispy calamari while the rest chose tomato bruschetta, king prawn cocktail and ham and pea terrine – all went down very well, although Duncan was not for sharing. I'll have to have a word with him! For mains my husband is a real steak fan so went for the rib eye cooked medium rare just to his liking. Duncan, of course, had the HUGE mixed grill while I opted for the Moroccan spiced lamb burger which I had tried at the taster night and enjoyed. Amy went for the guest ale battered cod and chips.

Every meal is served well presented and with little fuss and the settings are spacious with a nice corner table which we sat at, although we did remove the rather lovely candelabra in the middle.

A nice touch but I could not see across to talk to my daughter over the other side. She did think about nicking it for the wedding though! Okay, totally full – but it would be rude not to try a pud. Yes I am trying to lose weight for the wedding but there are still a few months to go.

By now there was only Duncan and I up for it – the lightweights said they were full. How could I resist the summer pudding? Duncan meanwhile went for the calorie-loaded cookie cup explosion. Obviously also not sticking to his pre-wedding diet.Finishing off with two floater brandy coffees we stumbled home and reflected on a very pleasant evening.

Sue Attwater

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PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING

Three-bedroom home has been much improved

A beautifully presented renovated and modernised three-bedroomed semi-detached home, 55 Musk Lane West in the village of Lower Gornal is for sale through Swinscoes at £179,950.

It is positioned just a short walk away from the main village which has a number of shops, pubs and local amenities. The property has been fully renovated and modernised by the current owners, including the installation of a new kitchen, bathroom, new windows, re-plastering, a garage conversion and much more, said a spokesman for the selling agent.

"The elevated positioned provides a fabulous open aspect view – visible from both the ground and first floor. There is a pleasant rear garden and driveway providing off-road parking."

In more detail it has a porch, an entrance hall with stairs off to the first floor landing and wood-effect laminate flooring.

The extended kitchen has a selection of wall-mounted and base-fitted units with work surfaces over, sink and drainer unit, integrated oven and hob, integrated dishwasher, space for a fridge/freezer and washing machine, splash back tiling and laminate flooring.

The dining room has sliding patio doors to the garden and an archway to the lounge, which has a window overlooking the frontage. Originally the garage, the sitting room also has a window to the front.

Upstairs, bedrooms one and three overlook the front, while bedroom has views over the rear.

The bathroom has a white suite with a chrome heated towel rail, low level WC, pedestal wash hand basin and bath with a shower over, part splash-back tiled walls and tiled flooring.

Outside is a rear garden with a patio and lawns with borders and a selection of shrubs and plants.

Swinscoes can help you with all aspects of property sales. A spokesman said: "At Swinscoes Estate Agents, offering the highest level of customer service is one of our main objectives and biggest strengths." Swinscoes are also experts in letting properties.

LOWER GORNAL £179,950

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- 3 bedroomed semi-detached
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- Renovated & modernised
- Short walk to the village
- Fabulous view

Everything you wanted, nothing you expected. Here is something quite extraordinary for the open market. The extreme - yet for the lucky purchasers' and indeed Kidderminster itself, richly rewarding - concept of conservation before cost! Three iconic Grade II Listed Weavers' Cottages painstakingly repaired by a fantastic Registered Charity called The Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust Ltd (WBPT) with substantial investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and are quite simply the most amazing period properties that you will ever see in this price bracket locally! What's on offer at such an affordable price is almost unbelievable with intriguing original features, brand new high quality fitments and a meticulous finish combining to create these very important historic homes renovated to the most exacting standards utilising a big budget way in excess of their market values but profit has not been the point – the focus is perfection in conservation which has been achieved!

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Four-bedroomed family house new to the market

New to the property market, this splendid four-bedroomed family-sized home in Ploverdale Crescent, Kingswinford, is for sale through Taylors at £250,000.

Extremely well presented, it comes with a large block paved driveway, central heating and double glazing and a superb rear garden.

KINGSWINFORD
£250,000

Its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance hall, a cloakroom with a WC, a lounge, a dining room opening to a family room area, a stunning fitted kitchen, a utility, bedroom one with en-suite, a house bathroom and three further bedrooms.

The selling agents are expecting a lot of interest to be shown in the sale of this home, with early viewings strongly advised. For further information, or to book a viewing, contact Taylors on 0121 550 3978 or visit www.taylors-estateagents.co.uk

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Guide Price £425,000-£475,000

Sutton Park Road Kidderminster DY11 6LD

Guide Price £130,000-£140,000

A rare opportunity to purchase a three bedroom semi-detached family home sitting on a good plot in a highly sought after location on the Bewdley side of Kidderminster. Entrance Porch. Reception Hall. Lounge. Dining Room. Kitchen. Utility. Downstairs w.c. Three Bedrooms. Bathroom. Garage. Fore and rear Gardens. Ample parking for a number of vehicles. Potential for side/rear extension subject to normal planning permissions. EPC D
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Windermere Way Stourport DY13 8JR

Guide Price £170,000-£190,000

Built in the early 1960's by eminent building Firm Mucklows, and now to be sold for the very first time since new in order to close an Estate, commanding a gorgeous open vista across Burlish Park Golf Club, also taking in the Clent Hills! - a larger style 3-bedroom link detached house with good sized level gardens therefore lending ideal scope for imaginative extension - subject to requisite Consents - to further captivate the views! Energy Rating D
EPC TBC STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

New House Button Oak Bewdley DY12 3AL

Guide Price £150,000-£200,000

A character non-listed brick/stone built double fronted semi-detached country cottage standing on approx. 0.22 of an acre in a pretty much original and now run-down state but with BIG potential. The property backs directly onto the ancient Wyre Forest giving privacy and shelter whilst also commands an exceptionally broad plot offering some 40ft of right hand side amenity thereby lending all kinds of possibilities for imaginative extension subject to requisite consents! Here is the perfect chance for your very own "grand design" in a lovely rural setting EPC G STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

Farfield Kidderminster DY10 1UQ

Guide Price £85,000-£95,000

A rare and superb opportunity to purchase a larger style end of terraced three bedroom property situated in a sought after and most convenient location just a few minutes walk from Kidderminster railway station and half a mile distant from the town centre itself. Lounge. Inner Hall. Cellar. Dining Room. Kitchen. Two Bedrooms and Bathroom to first floor. Attic Bedroom. Outside w.c. Fore and rear Gardens. EPC E
KIDDERMINSTER OFFICE 01562 822244

Bridge Road Alveley Bridgnorth WV15 6JN

Guide Price £135,000-£185,000

Built in the early 1970's and now to be sold for the very first time since new in order to close an Estate! - a larger style 3-bedroom detached bungalow in a pretty much original state, set within the lovely village of Alveley between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth and having a broad frontage together with a nice vista from the side gardens over to the character sandstone Church of St. Mary Virgin!. See floor plan at www.phippsandpritchard.co.uk. Immense further potential! EPC F
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MG lifts lid on its new game-changer

By Aidan Rennie-Jones

MG Motors has announced a new model to its line-up.

The MG XS will be a small SUV that will compete against the likes of the SsangYong Tivoli and Dacia Duster.

Last year MG introduced the GS, but the new model has a much more curvy appearance at the front end than its sibling. It also looks sportier thanks to chunky alloy wheels, silver roof rails and lots of chrome trim.

Inside it is the same story with optional leather interior, sat nav and carbon fibre effect trim throughout, again adding a touch of sportiness.

Costing from £15,095, the MG GS is available with a 1.5-litre turbo petrol engine with a manual or seven-speed automatic gearbox, as well as a host of upgraded technology.

Similar engines and gearboxes will be available in the new car.

Matthew Cheyne is the head of sales and marketing for MG. He said: "The MG XS will be a real game-changer in the compact SUV marketplace. The meaning behind the name is simple – S stands for SUV, X means extra.

"Featuring state-of-the-art driver technology and innovative design, the new model builds on our growing reputation for capability, performance and quality, positioned at a highly-affordable price – the customer gets extra, for less."

Full specifications and trim details are yet to be announced. However customers can pre-book test-drives and even pre-order their car online now.

The new model has a curvy appearance

It looks sporty with alloy wheels

The MG XS adds to the brand's already popular line-up, meeting market demand for an affordable, compact SUV.

For more information about the MG XS, visit www.mg.co.uk

The XS was unveiled at the London Motor Show last week and is expected to arrive in dealerships later on this year.

The MG XS adds to the brand's line-up and will compete against the likes of the SsangYong Tivoli and Dacia Duster

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Models shown : MG GS Exclusive with metallic paint in Spiced Orange at £20,090 and MG3 3Style+ in Newton Black with White Trophy Stripe graphics pack and white wing mirror caps at £12,045.40. †On the road (OTR) price of £8,695 applies to the MG3 3Time with no optional extras and £15,095 applies to the MG GS Explore with no optional extras. OTR prices include VAT where applicable, vehicle first registration fee, delivery, number plates and 12 months"Vehicle Excise Duty'. From prices exclude optional metallic paint, accessories and graphics packs. Fuel consumption values shown are based on official EU test figures and are to be used as a guide for comparative purposes and may not be representative of actual driving results. Offer terms and conditions apply:

*0% APR: Conditional sale. 0% APR available on all MG3 and MG GS models until 30.06.2017. A minimum deposit of 20% of the cash OTR price applies on all MG3 models and 30% of the cash OTR price applies on all MG GS models. Finance by MG Financial Services, a trading style of GMAC UK plc, PO Box 6666, Cardiff CF15 7YT, subject to status, availability and terms and conditions. Applicants must be aged 18 or over at participating dealers. See your local dealer or visit mg.co.uk/offers for details.

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MOTORING

Pretty perfect balance

By Simon Davies

BMW 440I, FROM £43,430

The formula for the BMW 4 Series is a simple one, really. Take one regular 3 Series, remove the rear doors for a sportier, coupe body style and slap a 4 Series badge on the back. The 440i Coupe we have here – with the exception of the barnstorming M4 – is the flagship model in the 4 Series line-up.

To the untrained eye, the changes to this latest version are rather subtle. The exterior has been gently redesigned, with some fancy LED lights appearing at the front and rear of the car.

Inside, BMW has worked to improve the cabin's 'perceived quality', adding three new upholstery colours to the options list, as well as three new choices for interior trim strips.

While it might be a familiar shape, there's no denying the face-lifted BMW 440i is still an incredibly smart-looking car. It cuts the right balance between muscular athleticism and reserved refinement, giving it a near-perfect Q-car appearance – particularly on the smaller wheels and winter tyres that were fitted to our test car.

Open the door and lower yourself into the snug seats and you'll find a cabin that oozes quality in that classic BMW fashion. Everything feels purposeful and solidly put together, while the controls all fall easily to hand. Hard, scratchy plastics are tough to find, with only a small amount adorning the lower reaches of the doors.

There are new LED rear lights

However, while the BMW's interior might look the part, the seats fitted to our test car were on the firm side, which left us feeling rather stiff after an afternoon blatting around the German countryside.

Up front, the driver and passenger will find head and shoulder room more than abundant. While this might be a sports coupe, you'll feel a long way from claustrophobic. Aside from the rather unforgiving seats, complaints should be kept to a minimum in this department.

Yes, the 440i does have a set of rear seats – although you'll find them close to useless when it comes to ferrying around anyone other than children.

Stick to the 3 Series if you want properly usable back seats.

Boot space is abundant, with the 440i offering up a respectable 425 litres of storage capacity – more than enough to swallow a couple of suitcases.

Prices for the 440i start at a considerable £43,430 – meaning it isn't exactly a cheap car to buy.

It is an incredibly smart-looking car

That said though, it is only available in the M Sport trim, which does include a fair amount of goodies as standard, such as 18-inch alloys, M Sport suspension, satellite navigation, more aggressive body styling, leather upholstery and LED headlamps and tail lamps.

A particular highlight is the 440i's infotainment system, which is arguably one of the best currently on sale. The dash-mounted display is incredibly fluid and very easy to read. The head-up display that is included as part of the BMW Professional Plus package is also a nice touch, showing information such as speed and sat-nav prompts directly in the driver's line of sight, and reducing time spent with your eyes off the road.

The BMW 440i is targeted at successful, middle-aged buyers who want the sportiness that its 3.0-litre six-cylinder engine provides, without the high-performance set-up of the M4.

To many, the 440i will offer the perfect balance between everyday drivability and high-speed fun.

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Own garden driveway.
£89,950
07774 715830.

STERLING ELITE EMERALD
4 berth touring caravan, 2011, excellent condition, wet heating system, end wash room, motor movers, 3/4 awning, loads of extras, too many to list.
£12,500 ono.
07896 359696.

SWIFT FAIRWAY 550
4berth, 2009, fixed bed/end bathroom, sunroof, all mod cons with motormover and awning plus extras, immaculate condition, £8,000. o.n.o.
01299 253263.

VW CAMPER T4
1999, mot october, 143,000 miles, two berth, pop top, sink, cooker, fridge and awning, good condition,
£6,000.
07588 535797.

caravans wanted

WANTED ALL CARAVANS
Any age or condition
Also motorhomes wanted.
TOP PRICES PAID
Immediate collection.
CALL THOMAS
07717 280 996
www.tscaravansandmotorhomes.co.uk

LET US SELL YOUR CARAVAN/ Motorhome for you and get the best possible price. Severn Valley Leisure, DY8 4HP. 01384 390183

jumble sales / fetes

BRIC-A-BRAC FAIR
Sunday, 14th May
Next Sale: 28th May
KINVER COMMUNITY CENTRE,
DY7 6ER
10.30am - 4pm
Tel: 01384 894464

car boot sales

BEST SUNDAY BOOTSALE
Only £5 per Car/Van.
7AM START. Cocksparrow Lane, Cannock WS12 4PB
07890 267 041

DUDLEY MARKET ART AND CRAFT FAIR
Saturday 6th May and 3rd June
Stalls £10.00,book NOW!
DMT LIMITED
07791552902
dmtltd@orangehome.co.uk

ASHWOOD CAR BOOT Sundays from 6am. By Roberts Farm Shop on A449, DY6 0AA. 07710 644908. www.ashwoodcarboot.co.uk

BIGGEST SATURDAY BOOTSALE
Catering positions available
A454 Rudge Heath between Wolverhampton and Bridgenorth
By Royal Oak pub Island WV6 7EE
07890 267 041

WEDNESDAY BOOT SALE
Now at Ivy House Farm, A461, Springhill, Muckely Corner Lichfield WS14 0BX
SATURDAY BOOT SALE
Boat Lane, Muckley Corner, Lichfield WS14 0BU
07890 267041

sports & leisure

FreeAds
IT'S FREE, IT'S EASY
For items upto £250.
Online at
bookanad.
expressandstar.co.uk

holidays

caravan parks

LUXURY HOLIDAY HOME for sale on 5* park. Golf, fishing, bar & restaurant, pet friendly £24,995 inc. 2017 site fees www.pearllake.co.uk 01568 708 326

self catering holidays

BURNHAM-ON-SEA
Self Catering Holiday Apartments
Disabled Facilities
Pet Friendly
01278 794111
www.GoSomerset.co.uk

travel abroad

READERS ARE REMINDED to check with any Advertisers that their holiday costs are fully covered by a recognised bonding or insurance scheme.

mind, body & soul

massage

THE TANNING ROOMS
Full body massage 30 mins £22, 40 mins £27, 1 hour £37
SHOWER FACILITIES
Call: 01902 782960

what's on

antique fairs

ANTIQUE/ COLLECTORS & VINTAGE FAIR
COPTHORNE HOTEL,
LEVEL ST., MERRY HILL, DUDLEY, DY5 1UR
SUNDAY 14TH MAY
9AM - 4PM
07783 680 627

3 Home & Services

collectables & memorabilia

QUEEN ANNE dolls house with basement and front steps, fully furnished, decorated and lit, excellent condition, £470. 01384 410882.

IT'S BACK IT'S BACK
MIDLANDS BIGGEST CAR BOOT SALE
SELLERS TURN UP FROM 6AM
THIS SUNDAY AND EVERY SUNDAY
Now at Dark Lane, Featherstone WV10 7HT
Just off main A460.
1minute *from J11 M6*
1minute *J1 M54*
6 am-2 pm
All enquiries Tel: 07831 192 116
Or for more information visit
www.gocarbootsales.com

WANTED SUNBEAM CAR MEMORABILIA
from 1899 to 1939.
Interested in pictures, literature, handbooks, drawings, patterns or very early car parts.
Also, seeking a car registration number on retention DA followed by up to four numbers.
01476 567391
or
07748 483732.
s12165ta@btinternet.com

furniture

ARMCHAIR GREY fabric, 8 months old, excellent condition cost new from DFS £395, accept £59. 01384 287461.

BROWN LEATHER three seater and two seater settee's, excellent condition. £200 ono. 07811 878705.

HORN SEWING CABINET
Horn 'Little Cub' sewing cabinet, folds for compact storage. As new condition, (£499 retail). Downsixing disposal. Stourbridge area.
£100.
07905 599242.

TWIN BEDS
2 x 36ins oak guest beds, in 'Truckle bed' configuration. Lower bed lifts up to same height. Hardly used. Downsizing disposal. Stourbridge area.
£150.
07905 599242.

TWO DURESTA sofas, as new, cost £4,700, 2 seater and 3 seater, £800 for both. 01902 780581.

TWO X 2 seater settees and 1 armchair, brown leather, immaculate condition. £130. 07761 398475.

items for sale

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED
That the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

LARGE BOX craft items and two die cutting machines, £85 ono. 01902 498366.

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

items wanted

A BEST CASH PRICE

FOR ALL RAILWAY COLLECTIONS
Any gauge or age
Hornby/Bachmann/Bowmans/ Roundhouse/Graham/Farsh/ any live steam. Also Die Cast, Corgi, Dinky, Spot On.
01384 836219 / 07891 713547
thetrainmaster67@ hotmail.com

AUTO MEMORABILIA WANTED
SHELL, ESSO, CASTROL ETC
ALSO
GARAGE CLEARANCES
Old Enamel Signs,
Petrol Cans,
Old Jugs,
Classic Car Parts,
Bikes and Motorbikes.
Anything old.
**** TOP PRICES PAID ****
01384 836219 / 07891 713547

READERS ARE ADVISED to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

SPECTRUM GAMES Wanted, plus any Spectrum 128k +2 or 48k computer wanted, also any old Crash magazines wanted. 01902 892918.

Yesterdays Furniture
Best prices given for single items or houses cleared. Scrap Gold Jewellery.
Call: 01384 482155 or 07802 475693

loans

READERS ARE REMINDED that they may require professional advice before entering into obligations.

t.v. / home entertainment

service

AERIAL AND TV SPECIALIST
Any TV Repairs, Plasma, LED etc, CCTV cameras supplied & fitted. Any area. Free Estimates. 7 days. Digital aerials, Sky installation, Wall mounts / TV setups. 07850 330251.

specialists at your service

aerials

CHOOSE CLASSIFIED

"I am very pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising Contract"

Steve - AA Digital Aerials

For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

AA DIGITAL AERIALS
SATELLITE & CCTV
AERIALS FITTED FROM £75
Work Guaranteed
01902 858191
01384 429166
01543 439095
01922 716029
07833 738857
VISA MasterCard
Checkatrade.com

A AERIAL AND SKY SPECIALIST CCTV cameras fitted/tv wallmount, free quote/any area. 07850 330251

alarms/security

PREMIER ALARMS
Supplied and Fitted £195
Servicing and Repairs
12 Months Warranty
All areas covered
All quotes beaten!
Call: 0121 601 9791

building services

DAVIES & SON BUILDERS
Over 35 years exp
All aspects of building work
Extensions, loft conversions, roofing, driveways & landscaping.
Discounts offered.
01902 579592 / 07837 994465

Brickwork Maintenance
Boundary Walls, Steps, Part Rebuilds, Brick Replacement, Repointing, Cleaning etc. CRB, C&G, Insured, Free Quotes.
Lee
0789 147 5718 or 0121 602 5313
lee@blackcountrybrick.co.uk

double glazing

A T S DOUBLE GLAZING
UPVC Doors & Windows
Very competitive prices, family run
FREE QUOTES & OAP DISCOUNTS
01922 442720 or 07783 229386

electrical services

STEVE JONES ELECTRICAL Rewires/sockets/fuse boards etc. All domestic and commercial work. 07786 858977/01902 846167.

external rendering / insulation

EXTERIOR RENDERING, full houses, patching, textured/smooth. 40yrs exp. Stuart 01902 324727.

fencing

PORTWAY FENCING
SPECIAL OFFER
10 Bays of quality fencing, concrete posts, gravel boards **£695**
Heavy duty panels supplied & fitted.
0121 531 5250 / 07866 137 656
Mon - Fri 8am - 4.30pm
Sat 8am - 12noon
83 Portway Rd, W'bury
DELIVERY AVAILABLE
www.portwayfencing.co.uk

CHOOSE CLASSIFIED

"I am extremely happy with the service I get from my Express & Star Classified Sales Representative and I would recommend them to anyone!"

Michael - Portway Fencing.

For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

gardening services

GREENALY
Fencing Decking
Slabing Turfing
DBS Checked
07956 584523 • 0121 550 1712

GARDENS TIDIED from £5 per garden. 25 years experience. Call 01902 713106 / 07813 184086.

gas fitting

READERS ARE ADVISED
To check that anyone carrying out any Gas work is Gas Safe Registered.
It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

house clearances

AJT CLEARANCES
FULL & PART HOUSE CLEARANCES
BEREAVEMENT SPECIALISTS
LICENSED WASTE CARRIERS
01384 732429 / 07752 175707

A ABSOLUTE BEST cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. **07852 172641 / 07710 360327**

painters / decorators

LOVE 2 WALLPAPER
Reliable & Friendly, Professional
Female Painters & Decorators
Attention to detail, competitive prices.
For the Perfect Finish with minimum hassle.
Plastering & Coving Work Undertaken
01384 287577 or 07812 484194
www.love-2-wallpaper.co.uk

A PROFESSIONAL DECORATING service by RC Decorating. Free competitive quotes: 07773 025880.

plastering

M & S PLASTERING & BUILDING Services. Home/Garden improvements.Mark or Sara: 07741 770897

removals

KT HOUSE REMOVALS
12 years experience.
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:
07771 727119

KINGSWINFORD REMOVALS AND HOUSE CLEARANCES
We move anything.
Professional service,
45 years' experience,
DFS approved and we take the stress away.
Please call:
07966 281957

CALL DEAN NOW: For all your Removal needs. 07429 453209/ 01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

CALL IAN. Man with a large van. No job too small, no distance too far. 07973 628534, 01902 891535.

roofing

A BAD LEAKING ROOF
All Roofing Work Undertaken.
NO JOB TOO SMALL
H. Robinson & Son
07738 976025

MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling, roof repairs, fascias and gutters. Call 01902 238989 / 07580 465449.

rubbish removal

LETS TALK RUBBISH No Skips Needed.Load/Remove any Waste, House Clearance. 07969 628382

skip hire

A.COBRA
LICENSED WASTE CARRIERS
No Skip We Load• Brick and Dirt Removal • Man and Digger Hire
01384 484309
07405 109317

BIG JOHN MOVES RUBBISH! No Skips, we load, fast friendly service, 25 Lister Rd, Dudley DY2 8JR, Est 35 years, 01384 232359.

4 Pets & Animals

equestrian corner

ALL READERS are advised to check if Horses, Donkeys or Ponies have the required Passport information.

GRAZING WANTED for horses, any size, prepared to do small amount of fencing, any area. 07974 063401 or 01902 497304.

guns & dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

pets corner

NOTICE TO READERS
Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

GREYHOUNDS MAKE WONDERFUL PETS
All neutered, innoculated and microchipped.
Call 01922 412212 or
www.rgtwolverhampton.co.uk
RGT Wolverhampton
@RGTWolves

5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering into any obligations.

commercial premises sale / let

LOCK UP SHOP TO LET
Located on busy main road in Dudley with lots of on site parking and large forecourt. Suit hairdressers/other trades.Zero rates.
Phone 07973670574 9am-4pm.

6 Property

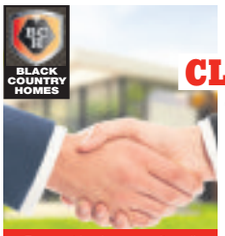
accommodation to let

NOTICE TO READERS
It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments/contracts.

FLAT TO RENT in Tinacre Hill, to proffesionals only, £550pcm inclsive of bills, 07587 697123.

properties wanted



CHOOSE CLASSIFIED
"We have been advertising in the Express & Star and Chronicles for over 20 years and consider it a key part of our business with the regular flow of calls, which our advertising generates."
Black Country Homes
For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

CHOOSE CLASSIFIED
"I am really pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising!"
Paul Westwood - Home Cash Buyer
For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

TRUSTED. RELIABLE.
WE BUY HOUSES.
Contact Mary on
07767 135 043
01384 686 050
mary@sotaproperties.com

7 Jobs

part time - general

NEWS DELIVERY AGENTS
needed in the Hungary Hill area of Stourbridge
Customer Services on 0800 174 064.

Home Cash Buyer
Sell today, sign today, complete when u wish
£££ RENT BACK OPTIONS £££
Houses / Land Required
Ring Paul 24/7 Local **07870 341 089**
Sandwell area: Call 0121 696 4154
Walsall & Cannock area: Call 01922 432049
Wolverhampton: Call 01902 489901
www.homecashbuyer.co.uk

Need to sell your home fast?
We can help you make a fresh start
With solutions to suit ...
you can clear your debts and make a fresh start
Purchase Agreed Within **7 DAYS**
ALL CIRCUMSTANCES CONSIDERED
COMPLETE ON DATE TO SUIT
FREE VALUATION AND LEGALS
FREE FRIENDLY ADVICE
LOCAL COMPANY

MARION | PROPERTY SOLUTIONS
WHY NOT CALL US TODAY
for an informal, friendly and confidential chat?
01384 930 978
*Terms and Conditions apply
OUR LINES ARE OPEN 24/7

WE BUY ANY HOUSE CASH
CALL US FREE 24 Hours/ 7days
0800 246 1047
CASH ADVANCE WITHIN 24 HOURS
WE OFFER **£20,000** CASH ADVANCE
NO Fees & FREE Solicitors
We Buy Any Area & Any Condition
www.ukfastsale.co.uk

MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY JOBSDAY
Every Thursday our special jobs section is packed with the week's latest vacancies.
Make sure you get your copy - it might be just what you've been waiting for.
jobs.shropshirestar.com
REAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU

full time - general

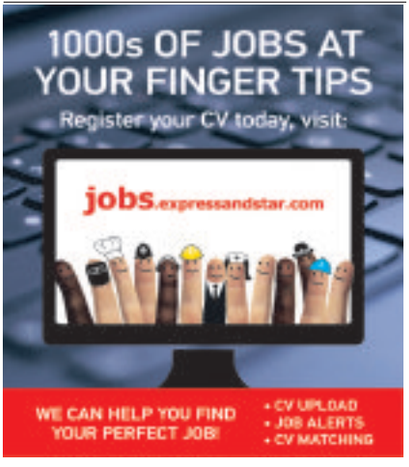
JOBS FAIR Friday 12th May. 10am - 2pm. Hundreds of jobs available on the day. Molineux Stadium, Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton, WV1 4QR. Free to attend. www.thejobfairs.co.uk

RECRUITMENT EVENT
JOBS FAIR
@ MOLINEUX STADIUM, WOLVERHAMPTON
OVER 500 JOBS AVAILABLE ON THE DAY
SPONSORED BY G4S
FRIDAY 12TH MAY
10AM - 2PM FREE TO ATTEND

Customer Advisor
This is a part-time showroom based opportunity to join a progressive company who can offer you a platform to build your career. Ongoing training will be provided.
Call Jonathan: **01384 89 39 29**
Job description: www.avantikb.co.uk/customer-advisor/
Avanti Kitchens Bedrooms & Bathrooms

courses

BIRMINGHAM: 17-18 JULY & 30 NOV.-1 DEC.
WOLVERHAMPTON: 16-17 SEPT.
TELFORD: 20-21 MAY & 23-24 OCTOBER
Learn how to take blood
TRAIN AS A PHLEBOTOMIST
NATIONALLY RECOGNISED AND ACCREDITED
Introduction to Phlebotomy
TWO DAY COURSE - National UK Qualification
NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE REQUIRED
ocn Create4Learning
For more info or to book: **www.geopace.com**
HIGH DEMAND IN: Hospitals - GP Surgeries - Clinics - Private Sector - Community - MOD



8 Motoring

cars over £1500

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

CITROEN XSARA PICASSO
2007, 44,000 miles, 1.6HDI, grey, abs, electric windows, electric mirrors, air con, alarm, MoT, rear parking sensors.
£2,100 ono.
07958 400177.

MUST BE SEEN
HYUNDAI ACTIVE 1.2 AUTO
Ice Silver,
62 Reg
(October 20, 2012),
4,300 miles from new,
one owner,
fsh at Hyundai main dealer.
£5,650.
07801 274933.

4X4
LANDROVER
DEFENDER 90
2.4 TDCi, 2008, hard top,
3-dr, manual, grey,
alloy wheels, electric windows,
tow bar, 2 owners from new,
full main dealer service history,
excellent condition.
£14,999.
07411 414284.

PRESTIGE
MERCEDES SL350 AUTOMATIC CONVERTIBLE
54 reg, 74,000 miles, fsh, Obsidian black, with cream leather, keyless go, power hood, panoramic glass roof, anti roll bar wind deflector, alloys, Sat Nav, Xenon lights,
2 keys.
Absolutely pristine.
£9,999.
Telephone 07836 204450 or 07545 601552.

EXCELLENT CONDITION
RENAULT CLIO DQ
1.5 DCi
2015, red, genuine 5,000 miles only.
Must sell
£7,350 ono.
01384 392260.

RENAULT MEGANE ESTATE 1.5DCi TOM TOM
2012, 73,000 miles, white, Sat Nav, abs, electric windows, electric mirrors, air con, fsh, long MoT.
£5,495 ono.
01902 897680.

MUST BE SEEN
SAAB 2.0 CONVERTIBLE
2007, 65,000 miles, 12 months MoT, metallic grey, grey leather interior, too many features to list.
Must be seen.
Call for details.
£2,750.
07976 869485.

LOW MILEAGE
SKODA OCTAVIA
2011, 12 months MoT, full main dealer s/h, genuine 35,000 miles, 4 new tyres, cambelt changed, rear privacy glass, excellent condition, non smoker. Just had over £700 spent on service.
£5,595 ono.
Telephone 07752 065437.

MUST BE SEEN
SUBARU OUTBACK RD 3.0
2005, petrol, automatic with triptronic gear box, long MoT, 107,000 miles, fsh, white with cream leather interior, EW, AC, CD and radio, sat nav, triple sunroof, very good condition.
£3,900. o.n.o.
07939 287001 N/T.

IMMACULATE
TOYOTA AYGO
2016, as new, 1,800 miles, black, abs, electric windows, air bag, alarm, MoT, central locking, one owner, pas, 4 door, free road tax, very economical.
£6,500 ono.
07977 000936.

IDEAL FIRST CAR
VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 BREEZE
2008,
60,000 miles,
glass roof,
long MoT.
£1,895
07913 981460.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2SXi
2011, 1 previous lady owner, 33,000 miles, 6 months MoT, FSH, last serviced at 32, 800 miles, bluetooth / CD / Aux, factory alarm, AC, 2 keys, clean interior / exterior,
£3,695 ono.
07871 661625.

AUTOMATIC
VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4 SE
2010, blue, 5dr, 28,000 miles,
12 months MoT, FSH,
heated seats, air con etc.
Excellent condition.
£4,500 ono.
Halesowen 07908 009210.

MUST BE SEEN
VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN CDTi
2007, black,
one owner,
12 months MoT,
excellent condition.
£2,200
07913 981460.

cars under £1500

AUDI A2 1.4 SE
2002, grey, 75,000 miles, service history, lots of documentation, two previous owners, MoT to January, excellent condition, new starter motor fitted, alloy wheels, manual, aluminium body.
£1,195.
07973 256153

MUST BE SEEN
CITROEN C2 1.6VTS
05 reg, black, long MoT.
Very good condition.
Usual extras.
£750 ono.
Telephone 07874 870104.

FIAT IDEA 1300cc
Diesel, full MoT, EW, central locking, 2 keys, CD, Radio, very good runner, good condition, low insurance group.
£900 ono.
07453 046600.

FORD FIESTA STYLE
2006, 3-door hatch,
metallic blue,
11 months MoT,
electric windows,
CD player, alarm.
£750
07538 650368.

FORD FIESTA ZETEC 16V
2001, excellent condition, long MoT, owned from new, economical, reliable, in use daily, CL, PAS.
£375 o.n.o.
07486 470167.

LOOK
FORD FIESTA ENCORE
L reg, silver, 3 door, hatchback, 1299cc, 55,000 miles.
MoT August 2017.
On SORN.
£400 ono.
Telephone 01902 835891.

DIESEL
FORD MONDEO 2.0 DIESEL
03 reg, grey, nine months MoT,
£600 ono.
01902 652521.

HONDA ACCORD, 1999, 59,000 miles, 2.0 Vetch, auto, silver, air con, fsh, long MoT, cruise control, very good condition, £750 ono. 07492 364161.

KIA PICANTO
2004, 35,000 miles, silver, long MoT, CD, ideal 1st car, £30 tax.
£1,150 ono.
07910 579449.

BARGAIN
PEUGEOT 407HDi 1.6 DIESEL
2007,
123,000 miles on clock,
FSH,
MoT end September.
£1,200
01902 564428.

RENAULT CLIO DYNAMIQUE
2003 - 16V, 80,000 Miles, Good Condition, MoT 21/03/18, Blue, ABS, E/W, Air Bags, Alarm, Cent Lock, PAS, S/roof. Ideal first car or 2nd runabout.
£995
07764 633748

EXCELLENT CONDITION
RENAULT CLIO DYNAMIQUE 16V
Petrol car, 2003,
red, 104,000 miles,
6 months MoT,
excellent condition.
£525
07940 211095.

classic cars

WANTED SUNBEAM CAR MEMORABILIA
from 1899 to 1939.
Interested in pictures, literature, handbooks, drawings, patterns or very early car parts.
Also, seeking a car registration number on retention DA followed by up to four numbers.
01476 567391
or
07748 483732.
s12165ta@btinternet.com

motorbikes

BIKE WANTED Naked / sit up, anything over 400cc with MoT, paid up to £1,000. Biker jacket also wanted 48 - 50 ins chest. 07754 121452.

BSA BANTAM 1968
175cc
Total rebuild, as new,
£1,950.
07710 700187.

scrap vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

A BETTER PRICE
for scrap or damaged cars and commercials. Spares for sale.
NINE LOCKS VEHICLE DISMANTLERS LTD
Brierley Hill 01384 76566 or 70553. Evenings 75397. DY5 3JZ.

vehicles wanted

alan reed cars
Used cars wanted for cash
Top prices paid. HP settled.
Buy could call.
01562 711083 / 07831 245313

CROWN MOTORS guarantee best price for your unwanted cars/vans. 07903 549849, buyer will call.

spares & accessories

clutches / brakes / gearboxes

A CLUTCH CHANGE MOBILE
For Example:
Citroen C1, C2, C3
Hyundai 110, Toyota Yaris
Clios & Micras
Ring for quotes on others!
30 yrs experience
ALL AREAS COVERED
Call Bob
01384 251328
07972 169554
anytime

9 Local Information

public & legal notices

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES
For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to
Marie Hogg on 01902 713146
or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk
(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

10 Personals

personal

ATTRACTIVE lonely Female seeking broadminded males within a 20 mile radius. 01902 489 181.

Angels
The largest adult superstore in the Midlands
• Adult Toys • Sexy Lingerie
Cinema Now Open
Unit 5 Frederick Street, Walsall WS2 9NE
01922 635544

GENTLEMAN 83 YEARS YOUNG
1.75m tall, slim, strong, fit and very healthy, good company, well travelled, humerous, gentle and giving.
Would like to find a lady companion who would be whatever age, slim, smart, outgoing who wishes to partake in the better things in life and travel.
Full length photo if possible/returned.
Box Number P20796 ,
Express and Star,
Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

sports clubs

DUDLEY SPORTS 6-A-SIDE SUMMER TOURNAMENT
Saturday May 20,
Sunday, May 21, 2017.
Saturday morning session,
U'6s, U'8s, U'13s.
Afternoon session
U'10s, U'12s, U'16s
Sunday, morning session
U'7s, U'9s and U'11s,
Afternoon session,
U'14's, U15's boys,
Girls, U10's to U16's
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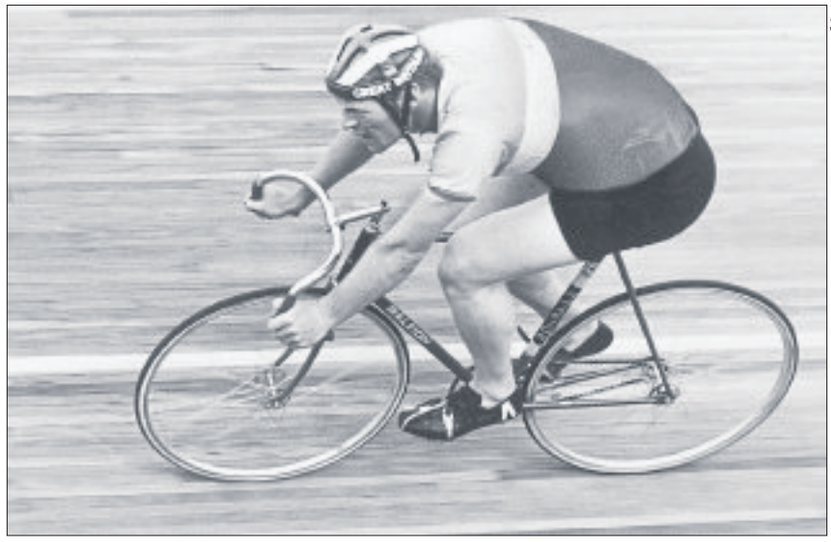
Trevor Gadd with two major trophies and some of his jubilant supporters delighted at his Olympic selection



Trevor Gadd in action at Leicester, where he set a record for the 200 metres

Trevor Gadd after winning a national sprint championship

Trevor, you will never now be forgotten again

SPORTING MEMORIES

Report by John Scott

NOBODY knew who he was when he returned from his new home in Canada to the city of his glory days. But the name of Trevor Gadd will never been forgotten again.

For it has just been decided that it will be added to Wolverhampton's Sporting Hall of Fame later this year.

David Viner, chairman of the cycling section of Halesowen Athletic and Cycling Club of which Trevor is a life member, nominated him for the award.

He said: "I am delighted that the nomination has been accepted. I believe Trevor has been an an under-valued sportsman and this should help set the record straight."

Plaques

Trevor lived in Elmdon Road, Oxley – just two miles from Aldersley Stadium where the Hall of Fame books and wall plaques are displayed – from the age of 14. He went to Elston Hall Nursery and Junior School, Wobaston Secondary Modern and Wulfrun College.

He represented Great Britain in the 1976 Olympic games, the 1977 World Track Championships and the 1978 Commonwealth Games in which he won silver medals in the individual and tandem sprints.

Sadly he was involved in a bad crash soon after the Games and retired from the sport.

At one stage he had also been a discus and hammer thrower and shared the same coach as Olympic gold medal winning javelin thrower Tessa Sanderson.

Mr Viner said: "Trevor came from a humble background and did not get any of the financial support given to riders now.

"In those days you had to give your GB jersey back at the end of the race. Lottery money has made a big difference to the life of sportsmen and women.

"Trevor moved to Canada and, a few years ago came back to see his dad.

"Aldersley Stadium meant a lot to him because he did a lot of training and riding there. He expected a warm welcome but somebody there said they had never heard of him, a comment he took personally."

Mr Viner is now hoping to encourage Trevor, now aged 65, to come back to this country once more to receive his award.

Ambassador

The ceremony is likely to take place in September and if he cannot make it his brother, who lives in Leeds, will be asked to take his place.

Chairman of Wolverhampton's Sports Advisory Council, Peter Holmes MBE, said: "Trevor Gadd upholds all that is good in sport and is a fine ambassador for Wolverhampton.

"He also provides an immense incentive for every young cyclist."

Trevor's story tells of when he was a lad living just a couple of miles from Aldersley Stadium. He rode the track there as a schoolboy. His nickname by the spectators was 'Tiger' with his family being factory workers.

He was not sure what the other kids parents did for a living but they had the sprints and tubs while he had a road bike converted to fixed wheel with tubes and clincher tyres and could still hold his own.

Previous inductees include athlete Denise Lewis, Le Mans winning racing driver Richard Atwood and Wolves footballers Bert Williams and Billy Wright.

In action – Trevor Gadd will be added to the Sporting Hall of Fame

Recalling richest prizes in football

EUROPEAN CUP winners with perennial rivals Liverpool and Manchester United will recall claiming the richest prizes in club football at a Wolverhampton pub next month.

Alan Kennedy and David May both have medals from going to the top table, during their playing careers, with the Reds and United respectively.

The duo will now headline an event titled 'Vintage Reds' at the Cleveland Arms Sports Bar, Stowheath Lane, on June 8.

Kennedy made all the difference with winning strikes for Liverpool in both the 1980 and 1984 European Cup finals, despite operating as a left-back. May spent nine years as a squad player at Old Trafford, where he would win two Premier League titles, two FA Cups and the now re-branded Champions League.

Tickets to see Kennedy and May start with standard entry costing £12.

VIP packages are £30 including priority seating, a buffet and a professional photograph with Kennedy and May – but only a handful of this category remain.

Tickets can be bought online, at either www.clevelandarms.com or call in at the venue or dial 01902 451 021.

Woffinden misses out in Grand Prix

TAI WOFFINDEN went agonisingly close to a semi-final spot in the opening Speedway Grand Prix of the year – but he was still happy with his work.

The Great Britain star notched eight-points in Krsko, Slovenia, not quite enough to make the cut. But he won two heats along the way and insists he's laid the foundations to build on in the long season ahead.

He said: "I'm taking the positives from the first Grand Prix and I've put eight points on the board which is a solid start.

"It's not bad but could have been better, that's the best way to sum up how I feel about it. It's good to get the first one out of the way and it gives me something to build on. Of course it was a shame to miss out on the semi-finals but I've got something to work on."

Woffinden admitted he felt race rusty at the start line after a lack of competitive racing in the build-up to Slovenia.

"There were some starts I made a bit of a jump at but that's down to being race rusty. Starts are such a big part of this sport and you have to be in the groove which isn't easy when you've not raced much.

"As I say there's lots to work on, lots to improve on and I'm sure we'll get there."

Pushing boat out to get on the water

FREE and low cost sailing and windsurfing is on offer across the region as the national RYA Push the Boat Out 'have-a-go' festival gets under way this weekend.

Last year more than 4,000 people across the Midlands discovered sailing for the first time through the initiative.

Five clubs and centres – Aldridge, Sandwell Valley, Dudley, Himley Hall and Greensforge – will be opening their gates for open days and 'taster' events before the nine-day festival ends on Sunday, May 21.

For families who find the experience to their liking,it can cost just £20 a month, or even less to join a sailing club.

All equipment for the Push The Boat Out initiative will be provided, and refreshments will be available. All that is required are a towel and a pair of old trainers.

To find your nearest event and for full details of exactly what is going on and when at each participating sailing club and centre, visit www.rya.org.uk/PTBO – to search for an event where disabled people can get on the water tick the 'Sailability' activities box.

Gadd-about! Cyclist Trevor rides into city's sporting Hall of Fame

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Hales denied on try count in cup final

OLD Halesonians were cruelly denied the North Midlands Cup on a try count as Bournville claimed the trophy for the second time in five seasons.

A last minute try from wing James Whybrow drew Bournville level at 25-25 in the final at Dudley Kingswinford. James Hussey was off target with his conversion attempt, but the whistle blew, and, fter a check with the fourth official, referee Andy Wigley confirmed Bournville were winners 4-3 on tries. Competition regulations do not provide for extra time in any of the finals.

Bournville's win completed a successful season after they beat Kettering in a promotion play-off and they will join Old Halesonians in National Three Midlands next season. The end-to-end finalwas a superb advert for the competition.

Bournville opened up an eight points lead with an early try from number eight Drew Harper and a penalty from Hussey.

Old Halesonians hit back with a try from lock Richard Sawyer, Chris Hooper added the conversion.

But Bournville turned around with an eight points lead after lock Tom Holliday went over in first half injury time with Hussey converting.

The game swung in Old Hales' favour in the third quarter as Neil Mason rounded off a sweeping attack. Hooper added the conversion followed by a penalty and the cup appeared to be heading to Wassell Grove for the second time in three seasons when tighthead Richard Taylor finished off a sustained attack. But Old Halesonians twice had men sin binned for persistent offending under pressure and Bournville made them pay. Holliday was driven over for his second try, followed by Whybrow's try.

Bridgnorth became the third winners of the North Midlands Cup Plate by beating Hereford 32-0, while Ross-on-Wye won the North Midlands Vase for the third time in their history, beating Bromyard 23-14.

North Midlands' first-ever meeting with Hampshire at senior level proved forgettable as they were trounced 62-13 in the opening match of the Bill Beaumont County Championship Division Two South at Dudley Kingswinford.

North Midlands featured five Stourbridge representatives – Jack Lea, Ben Trinham, Rod Petty, Stefan Thorp, Mark George and Joe Heatley, as well as Old Halesonian Steve Leach.

Mechanical fault ruins Ayres chance

HEATHENS went down 46-43 in the Ivor Brown trophy at Leicester. Danny Ayres wowed the crowd by winning heat four without a saddle but his late troubles proved a bigger pain in the backside.

The Motor Market Heathens number five, who also represents the Lions in the Premiership, had scored eight from three rides locked up in heat 13 before a mechanical fault caused him to miss the two minutes in a last-heat decider.

Ayres could not catch up as Josh Bates, the reserve who rode at number one for the much-changed hosts, led Matt Williamson in the only 5-1 of the night to secure the Ivor Brown Memorial Trophy.

Daughter follows in Yeltz hotseat

Karen Brookes, new Yeltz chairwoman

Football

HALESOWEN Town's new chairwoman Karen Brookes is vowing to be as "hard-working and passionate" as her father Colin while fighting for the interests of the Yeltz.

The lifelong fan was pictured after officially taking over at the Evo-Stik NPL Premier Division club on May Day. She squeezes in following England home and away with attending a Premier League game most weekends and working internationally as an executive director of a PLC company.

The new Yeltz chairwoman, who fills a role left vacant since the end of the 2015-16 season when her father became club president, is also a keen athlete, having completed a number of half marathons, marathons and triathlons while running several times a week for fun.

Brookes, who can trace her love of the game back to her father taking her to football training as a toddler, said: "This is a great opportunity to work with an amazing group of people and a club that has a real football heritage.

"My family's association with Halesowen Town Football Club spans over 20 years and is a club my dad feels so passionately about."

NO LYE, IT'S BEEN GOODALL

HE led Lye Town to their highest-ever league position this year but Darren Goodall has blown the final whistle on his time in charge.

At one time Lye were knocking on the door of the Evo-Stik League First Division South during an impressive Midland League campaign that ended with a fourth-place finish.

But after seven years in charge, Goodall has stepped down so a fresh pair of hands can take the lead role he shared with joint-boss Martin Thomas,

Now Goodall has looked back on his time at the club who he helped make the leap from the West Midlands Regional League to the Midlands Premier. Goodall, aged 46 and originally from Rowley Regis but now living in Telford, said: "I think it has been a great seven years which has been up and down.

Trophies

"I would liked to have won a few more trophies but I got the team out of the West Midlands Regional League where they were fighting relegation."

Goodall took over seven years ago when the club were fighting to stay in the Premier League of the WMRL, but turned them into title-challengers.

In his third year in charge they endured heartbreak in the last game of the season – when they just needed to win their final game to gain promotion.

"I think it was our first away defeat. We had a great season and had been right up there at the top of the league, but we got pipped to the post in the last game and were left gutted."

AFC Wulfrunians ended up leapfrogging Lye by one point to win the league and achieve promotion. But Lye overcame their heartache the following season (2013/14), and were crowned champions.

Since then they have been finishing higher and higher in the Premier Division of the Midlands League. They claimed fourth place at the end of this season – their highest finish in non-league football.

Darren Goodall enjoyed ups and downs, but mostly ups, during seven years at Lye Town

Clash of Titans in vital fundraiser

STOURBRIDGE Rugby Clubs' amateur sides bring the curtain down on the season tomorrow night (Friday) as they compete for bragging rights, the 'Clash of the Titans' trophy and most importantly, raise charity cash.

Stourbridge Lions 2nds, the Greyhounds, and Lions 3rds, Grasshoppers, take to the Stourton Park first team pitch to raise funds for both the club and its chosen charity, the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

The charity was selected because the wife of regular Hoppers back row Rich Barratt suffers from the disease.

The Grasshoppers will be looking to avenge last season's narrow defeat to the Greyhounds who recently won promotion to the North Midlands Reserve League Division 2.

The teams will take to the field in new sponsored kits with all proceeds from shirt sales, gate receipts and the raffle being split between the club and the charity. The fun starts at 7pm, with refreshments available and free post-game entertainment from a local live band.

Fordhouses win against neighbours

WEST Bromwich Dartmouth looked in trouble at 144-6 at Brockhampton in the Birmingham League Premier Division but 49 from Shozair Ali boosted them to 224 all out on completion of 50 overs.

Brockhampton were bowled out for 182 after at one stage being 64-5.

Walsall continued their bright start with a 118-run win at Dorridge who could only muster 113 in response to the visitors' 231 with new overseas player Sivakumar Duvvarapu taking 3-24.

Knowle & Dorridge earned their first win of the season at home to Wolverhampton who were bowled out for 214 in 47 overs. K&D cruised to a six wicket win with 11 overs to spare.

Smethwick are among the three sides at the top of Division One following an eight-wicket winover Bridgnorth, who were dismissed for 110.

Hosts Walmley were beaten by Himley by just two runs as they pursued 291-7. Greg Wright scored 91 for Himley, whose Stuart Wedge took 4-35 in reply.

Among the front-runners in Division Two are Fordhouses who defeated neighbours Wombourne by 18 runs.

Halesowen are still seeking their first win after defeat to C&R Hawks. Lee Evans hit 68 not out as Hawks totalled 229. Halesowen were skittled for 123 with ex-England Test player Kabir Ali taking 5-24.

Penkridge (220-7) beat Pershore by three wickets with 10 balls in hand.

At Deansfield in Division Three, Brewood (207-8) overcame newcomers Worcester Nomads by 10 runs.

Stourbridge have two wins from two after romping to a nine-wicket success at Nuneaton after the home side collapsed to 90 all out.

Sam Bates hit 77 and took 3-54 as Streetly (289-9) beat Handsworth (201) by 81 runs.

Triathletes claim four podium places

BCT Juniors took four podium places across the age groups at the Ludlow Junior Triathlon at Lucton School.

Lydia Silk and Ollie Mason each took second in the Youth age group in 50:04 and 45:47 respectively, Abbie Kennard second in the TS2 category in 28:34 and Scarlett Williams first place in TS1 category in 17:36.

Ollie Evans was fourth in Youth category in 52:01 and Sydney Williams 10th TS3 in 56:42. Izzy Mason opted to carry on and finish her race despite a major mechanical setback after a tumble off the bike and came home 16th out of 20 in the TS2 age group in 38:13.

★★★

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